GARDEN PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

Bring on spring

The best plants to grow now

Tulip fever

Brilliant bulbs in a country garden

Problem solvers

Top picks for wet and shady spots

DO LESS, GET MORE

The trick to going low maintenance

RHINO
THE GREAT BRITISH RHINO
perfectly evolved for
THE GREAT BRITISH GARDEN
RHINO greenhousesdirect
MADE IN BRITAIN

There's nothing quite like a Rhino. A greenhouse designed by gardeners for gardeners, it has all the features you need to make growing plants a simple joy. The elegant structure belies its storm-defying strength, and each one has a 25-year guarantee so you can enjoy peace of mind and the peace of gardening.

rhinogreenhouses.co.uk
0800 694 1929

Welcome

JOHN CAMPBELL

I always feel that April is spring proper, with the arrival of bright and brilliant tulips. This issue, we celebrate with a visit to The Laskett in Herefordshire, where, since Sir Roy Strong handed the garden over to the charity Perennial, the team has set about filling the rooms with tulips (page 34). Discover which cultivars they rate and how they set out the bulbs for the most impact.

We also check out the new Mayfield Park in Manchester, the setting for the inaugural RHS Urban Show this month (page 52); sneak a peek at a private rooftop terrace in London designed by Maïtanne Hunt, with creative ideas for dealing with a compact urban space (page 94); and explore a breathtaking garden in Corfu, on the cliffs overlooking the Ionian Sea (page 62). If you're finding it difficult to get into the garden, you can feel heartened by Charlie Ryrie's story as she shares her personal journey from cut-flower farmer to low-maintenance, wildlife-loving gardener (page 84), following a series of events that led her to change her practice from intensive growing to learning to let go in her plot.

Also this issue, we shine a spotlight on plants for problem places, with a profile of *Carex* (page 44), and some intriguing and unusual woodland plants perfect for shady spots, courtesy of Aoba nursery (page 70). You'll find our pick of the best plants for gardens that get waterlogged (page 101), which after the wettest winter and February on record, should offer some helpful options. And if that doesn't sate your appetite for plants, we also have top ten picks for April from Lowther Castle (page 18); and our new columnist Nigel Slater shares his thoughts on the perennial dilemma of what to grow, including whether to attempt plants he has failed with before, and how much colour to allow into his space (page 31).

Stephanie Mahon

STEPHANIE MAHON, EDITOR

Disporum cantoniense 'Leigong Chocolate' is among the unusual plants at Pépinière Aoba, page 70.

ANNAICK GUITTENY

ONLINE THIS MONTH

Getting excited about the RHS Chelsea Flower Show yet? Keep up with the latest stories about the show at **gardensillustrated.com**

Instagram @gardens_illustrated
Twitter @GdnsIllustrated
Facebook @gardensillustrated

Contents

APRIL 2024

Places

34 **The next chapter** Now managed by the charity Perennial, The Laskett is entering a new phase, which in spring includes a wealth of tulips

52 **Park life** A derelict brownfield site next to a former railway yard is now brimming with life as Manchester's first new city park in a century

62 **Natural selection** British designer Jennifer Gay has transformed a neglected, ancient olive grove into a sublime garden in Corfu

76 **Visionary spaces** We take a look at five private and public boundary-pushing gardens from around the world that are addressing sustainability and climate change with style

84 **Learning to let go** Grower Charlie Ryrie details her personal journey from intensive flower farming to lower-maintenance gardening, adapting to life's challenges

Plants

18 **Plantsperson's favourites** In the second of a new series, Lowther Castle's head gardener Andrea Brunsendorf chooses her top ten plants for April

44 **Plant profile: *Carex*** Subtle grass-like sedges are perfect for adding texture and beauty in challenging and shady spots in the garden

70 **Shady characters** Two passionate plant enthusiasts have set up a new nursery specialising in rare and unusual plants for shade

101 **Flood-proof plants** As our weather becomes wetter and wilder, flooding and waterlogging are becoming more frequent, so what should you plant to cope with a changing climate?

People

31 **The garden chronicles** The question of what to grow this year has Nigel Slater thinking back on past failures and hoping wildly for the future

43 **Gardening talent** Meet Hannah Moore, an Elizabeth Hess Scholar at Tresco Abbey Gardens

60 **Who's who** Landscape designer John Wyer on changing people's preconceptions and refusing to be pigeonholed

130 **The big idea** In the first of a new series of opinion pieces, Noel Kingsbury explores how gardeners might help to adapt to the post-climate-change world

Design

93 **Design news** New gardens for a vineyard in Napa, California

94 **Flights of fancy** Designer Maïtanne Hunt explains how she built a dramatic roof terrace, seven storeys up

99 **Sourcebook** Nine of the best garden studios and rooms

Regulars

3 **Welcome**

6 **Contributors**

9 **Dig in** New paints from Jinny Blom, and why we should ensure our bulbs are organic

25 **Kitted out** With stylish wear for working in the garden

28 **Subscription offer** Save when you subscribe to the digital edition of *Gardens Illustrated*

113 **Books** Including two new books on growing and choosing bulbs, and designer Manoj Malde on his new book and guilty garden secrets

127 **Crossword and back issues**

129 **Next issue** What's coming up in our May issue

Using drought-tolerant, largely native species, the garden of this holiday home in Corfu blends beautifully with the surrounding hillsides, page 62.

CLIVE NICHOLS

Subscribe & save

take out a digital subscription to *Gardens Illustrated*

SEE PAGE 28

COVER IMAGE

Tulipa 'Light and Dreamy' by Clive Nichols (page 34)

ON THE COVER

Bring on spring, page 18
Tulip fever, page 34
Problem solvers, pages 44, 70 and 101
Do less, get more, page 84

EVENTS AND OFFERS

- Save money when you subscribe to the digital edition of *Gardens Illustrated* – page 28

Our packaging

Members' copies of *Gardens Illustrated* are delivered in paper wrapping instead of recyclable plastic polywrap. This paper wrap is 100% recyclable and made from sustainably sourced paper. Please recycle in your kerbside recycling bin.

Design: Kate MacKay Roberts

GARDEN DESIGN TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS

“If you had shown me at the start of the course what I have produced for my final project, I wouldn’t have believed you! EA

Design: Duncan Cargill

Our Diploma and other professional development programmes are delivered at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew with a real-time, online option for those wishing to study with us from home. We also offer an extensive short course programme for professionals and garden enthusiasts at Kew Gardens and RHS Garden Wisley and an alumni programme for continuing professional development.

Visit our website **lcgd.org.uk** to see how our students are creating successful garden design careers and discover a course that is right for you.

LC GD LONDON COLLEGE OF GARDEN DESIGN

+44 (0)1483 762955 info@lcgd.org.uk

Contributors

ALEX DIMMOCK

ANDREW CROWLEY

Giacomo Guzzon

Landscape architect Giacomo selects the best *Carex*, page 44. “Carex *offers a multitude of forms, textures and sizes; a valuable addition to any garden, even in challenging spots.”*

Annaïck Guitteny

Annaïck photographs a French nursery, page 70. *“I was amazed at the range of plants grown by Cédric and Manon, showcasing their horticultural knowledge and passion.”*

Charlie Ryrie

Garden writer Charlie explains how she made her garden less labour intensive, page 84. *“It’s particularly poignant to look back at the garden I loved so much, now I am exploring a new plot.”*

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Charlotte Harris

Charlotte co-founded the values-driven landscape design practice Harris Bugg Studio with Hugo Bugg in 2017. She has won three Gold medals at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, as well as Best Show Garden in 2023.

Fergus Garrett

Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993 and is now CEO of the garden’s Charitable Trust. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008 and an RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 2019.

James Basson

James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design, a practice for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best Show Garden in 2017.

Anna Pavord

Anna was *The Independent*’s gardening correspondent for 30 years and is the author of the bestselling book *The Tulip*. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

Dan Pearson

Dan is one of the UK’s best-known garden designers. Among his many award-winning gardens is the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan. He was awarded an OBE in the 2022 New Year Honours for services to horticulture.

Sarah Price

Sarah is one of the UK’s most sought-after garden designers. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012, 2018 and 2023, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the Year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Membership and subscription enquiries and back issues

UK 03330 162114
USA/CANADA +1 888-941-5623 (TOLL-FREE)
REST OF THE WORLD +44 1604 973722
EMAIL gardensillustrated@ourmediashop.com
UK/REST OF THE WORLD *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 3320,
3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF.
USA/CANADA *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 40, Williamsport, PA 17703 USA.

Advertising enquiries

+44 (0)117 300 8547 rebecca.janyshiwskyj@ourmedia.co.uk

Editorial enquiries

+44 (0)117 300 8622 gardens@gardensillustrated.com
Gardens Illustrated, Our Media Ltd,
Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST.

Syndication & Licensing

Gardens Illustrated is available for licensing and syndication.
+44 (0)117 300 8787, emma.brunt@ourmedia.co.uk

App support

For App support please visit ourmediaapps.co.uk/digital-contact-form/

We abide by IPSO's rules and regulations. To give feedback about our magazines, please visit ourmedia.co.uk, email editorial.complaints@ourmedia.co.uk, or write to: Legal, Our Media Ltd, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST.

MAGAZINE CONTACTS

EDITORIAL	
Editor	Stephanie Mahon
Art director	David Grenham
Deputy art editor	Niki Goss
Production editor	Juliet Giles
Digital editor	Daisy Bowie-Sell
Commissioning content editor	Veronica Peerless
Content producer	Molly Blair
Botanical adviser	Dr James Compton
Thanks this issue	Tim Bates
ADVERTISING	
Group advertising director	Gino De Antonis
Advertising manager	Rebecca Janyshiwskyj 0117 300 8547 rebecca.janyshiwskyj@ourmedia.co.uk
Commercial brand lead	Kelly Warden 0117 300 8538 kelly.warden@ourmedia.co.uk
Advertising designers	Andrew Hobson and Cee Pike
INSERTS	
Laurence Robertson	+353 (0)876 902208
CIRCULATION, MARKETING, PROMOTIONS, PRESS & PR	
Newstrade manager	John Lawton
Subscriptions director	Jacky Perales-Morris
Direct marketing manager	Aimee Rhymer
Buyer	Karen Flannigan
MANAGEMENT	
Chief executive officer	Andy Marshall
Managing director	Andrew Davies
Head of brand marketing and brand lead	Rosa Sherwood
SYNDICATION & LICENSING	
Director of licensing & syndication	Tim Hudson, tim.hudson@immediate.co.uk
Head of licensing	Tom Shaw, tom.shaw@immediate.co.uk
Head of syndication	Richard Bentley, richard.bentley@immediate.co.uk
PRODUCTION	
Production director	Sarah Powell
Group production manager	Louisa Molter
Production co-ordinator	Lauren Morris

ourmedia

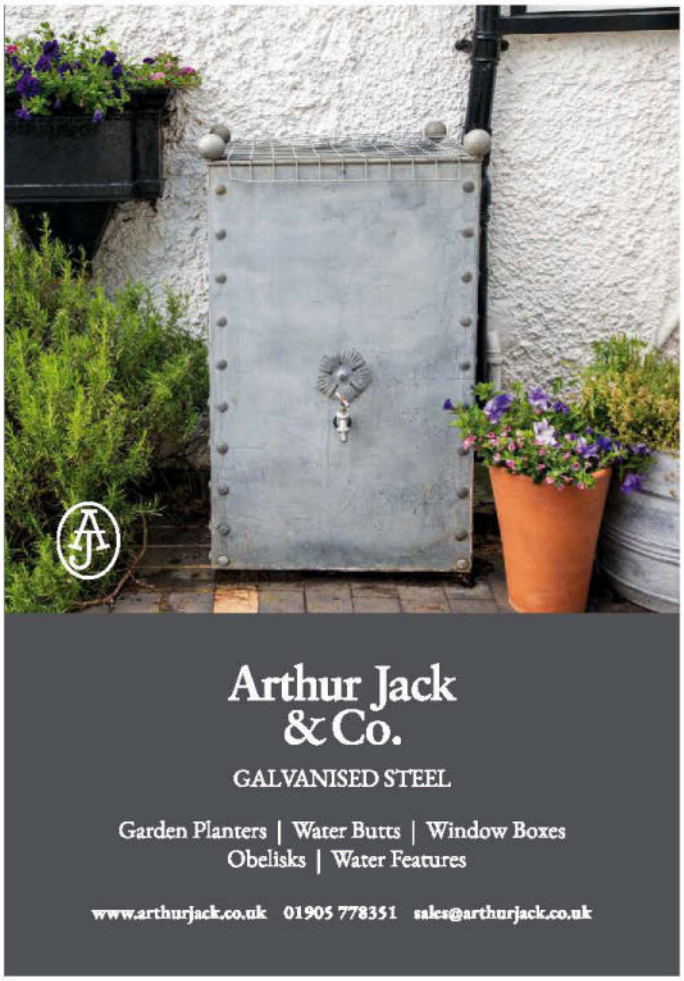
ipso. Regulated

Standard subscription rates: UK £77.87 per annum; Eire and Europe €127 for 13 issues; rest of the world US$181.87 for 13 issues. Distribution Frontline, Peterborough. US distribution Source IPD/Speedimpex. Email intiquery@seymour.co.uk. Printed in the UK by William Gibbons Ltd. *Gardens Illustrated* (ISSN 0968-8920) (USPS 015-608) is published 13 times a year (monthly with a Summer issue in July) by Our Media Ltd, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST, UK. Distributed in the USA by NPS Media Group, 2 Corporate Drive, Ste. 945, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodical postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Gardens Illustrated*, PO Box 401, Williamsport, PA 17703. Unsolicited manuscripts or artwork are accepted on the understanding that the publishers incur no liability for their storage or return. The contents of this magazine are fully protected by copyright and may not be reproduced without permission. The *Gardens Illustrated* cover is printed on 250gsm FSC Amadeus produced in Belgium by Burgo.
Our Media Company is working to ensure that all of its paper comes from well-managed, FSC®-certified forests and other controlled sources. This magazine is printed on Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certified paper. This magazine can be recycled, for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of them at your local collection point. All prices are correct at time of going to press.
© Our Media Ltd 2023.
Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation. ISSN 0968-8920.

FSC
www.fsc.org
MIX
Supporting responsible forestry
FSC® C015155

abc
Jan-Dec 2023
41,855 *
*Combined print and digital sales

Genus
GARDENWEAR
No more lost secateurs
Gardening trousers with stab-proof pockets
www.genus.gs
CALL US ON 0203 617 1166
Endorsed by
RHS
® The Royal Horticultural Society. Trade marks of The Royal Horticultural Society (Registered Charity No 222879/SC038262) used under licence from RHS Enterprises Limited.


Arthur Jack & Co.
GALVANISED STEEL
Garden Planters | Water Butts | Window Boxes
Obelisks | Water Features
www.arthurjack.co.uk 01905 778351 sales@arthurjack.co.uk

V&A

Threads of India

Design inspiration from the V&A archives

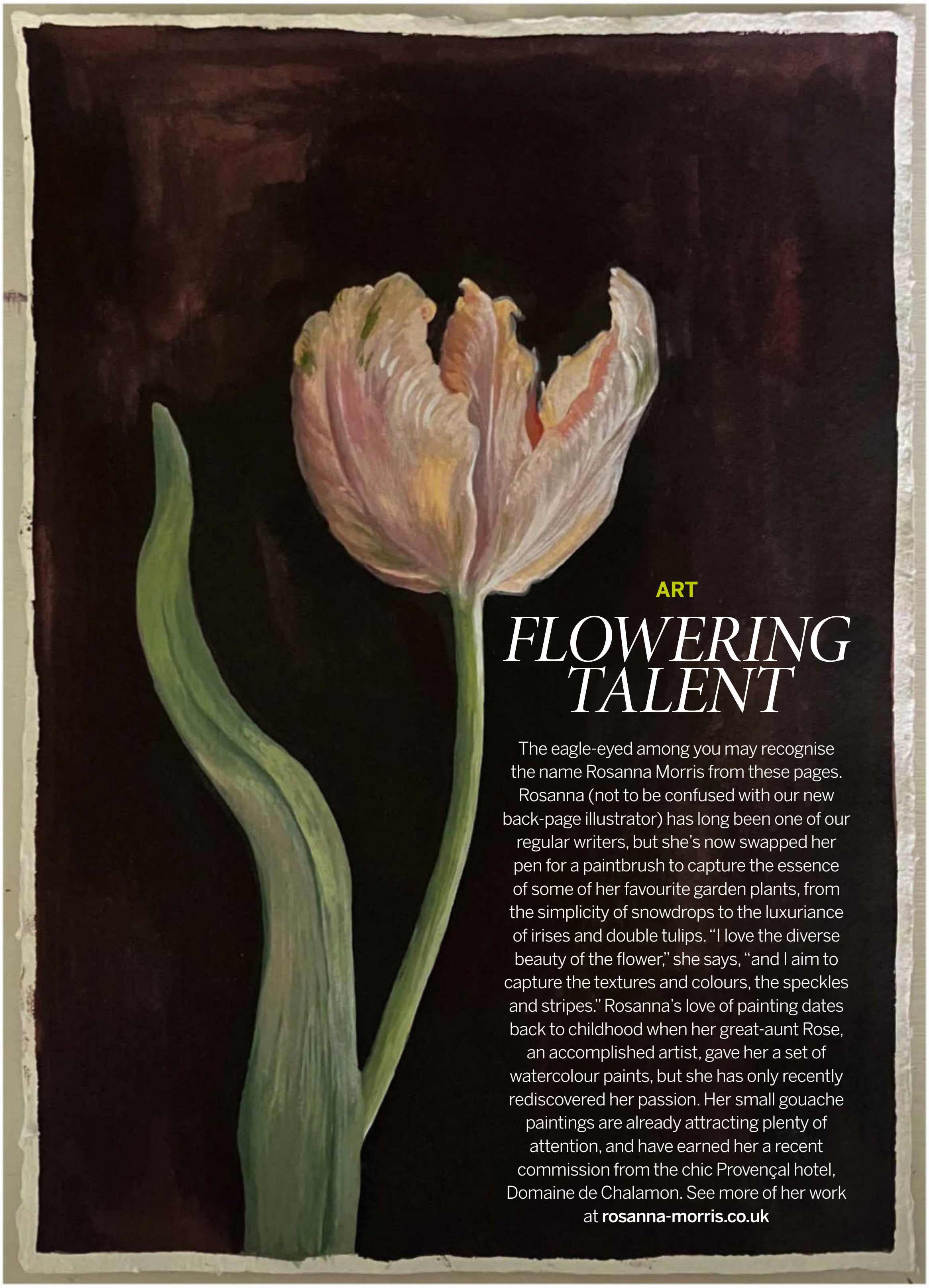
SOFAS & STUFF

Visit one of our 23 showrooms | 0808 178 3211 | www.sofasandstuff.com/toi

DIG IN

What's new, what's growing and what's going on this month

NEWS COMPILED BY MOLLY BLAIR



ROSANNA MORRIS

ART

FLOWERING TALENT

The eagle-eyed among you may recognise the name Rosanna Morris from these pages. Rosanna (not to be confused with our new back-page illustrator) has long been one of our regular writers, but she's now swapped her pen for a paintbrush to capture the essence of some of her favourite garden plants, from the simplicity of snowdrops to the luxuriance of irises and double tulips. "I love the diverse beauty of the flower," she says, "and I aim to capture the textures and colours, the speckles and stripes." Rosanna's love of painting dates back to childhood when her great-aunt Rose, an accomplished artist, gave her a set of watercolour paints, but she has only recently rediscovered her passion. Her small gouache paintings are already attracting plenty of attention, and have earned her a recent commission from the chic Provençal hotel, Domaine de Chalamon. See more of her work at **rosanna-morris.co.uk**

DAVE WATTS

Talking point

SHOULD WE BUY ORGANIC BULBS?

Many of us are coming round to the idea of gardening organically, especially when it comes to growing our own food, but even in an ornamental garden it makes sense to garden in as natural a way as possible, without the use of synthetic pesticides or fertilisers, using home-made compost, manure and other organic matter to feed your soil. But to garden organically, do we also need to ensure the seeds and bulbs we plant are produced organically?

Adam Hunt (above), who along with Lulu Urquhart runs both design studio Urquhart & Hunt and bulb supplier Organic Bulbs, thinks so. Bulbs and seeds are often produced on a mass scale, where pesticides and fertilisers have been used, so with non-organic bulbs you may well be importing the chemicals you've gone to great lengths to keep out of your garden. "There are a lot of benefits to bulbs that are grown organically," says Adam, "both in terms of the people farming them, of the environment itself and then surprisingly in terms of the insects that feed on the bulbs once they are flowering."

This, he says, is especially true for early pollinators. "When they are weak from hibernating all winter, the first meal of nectar that an insect will ingest is from a bulb. That first hit, when it is laden with fungicide and toxins, can seriously damage these emerging insects and could even be fatal. This is why it is so important to consider what we are planting as a food source for our essential pollinators."

To read more about organic bulbs, scan the QR code below with your phone camera or head to **gardensillustrated.com/organicbulbs**

BRITT WILLOUGHBY DYER

DECOR

Indoor-outdoor

Landscape designer Jinny Blom has collaborated with paint manufacturer Mylands to launch a new collection of colours for outside and in. Inspired by nature, colours include red Blomster (used on benches and chair), Cooper's Earth (on windows above), Cragside (on cladding above) and Woodnight (on table below). Available as exterior masonry paint, multi-surface finish and marble matt emulsion. Prices start at £31 for 1L of matt emulsion. ***mylands.com***

Gartenart
swimming ponds

dive into nature

Now is the perfect time to plan your natural swimming pond. See gartenart.co.uk

"When you have swum in natural water I think you develop a love of it. Then you want to replicate it in your garden. It's like wild swimming – but your very own wild swimming experience where no-one else is going to disturb you."

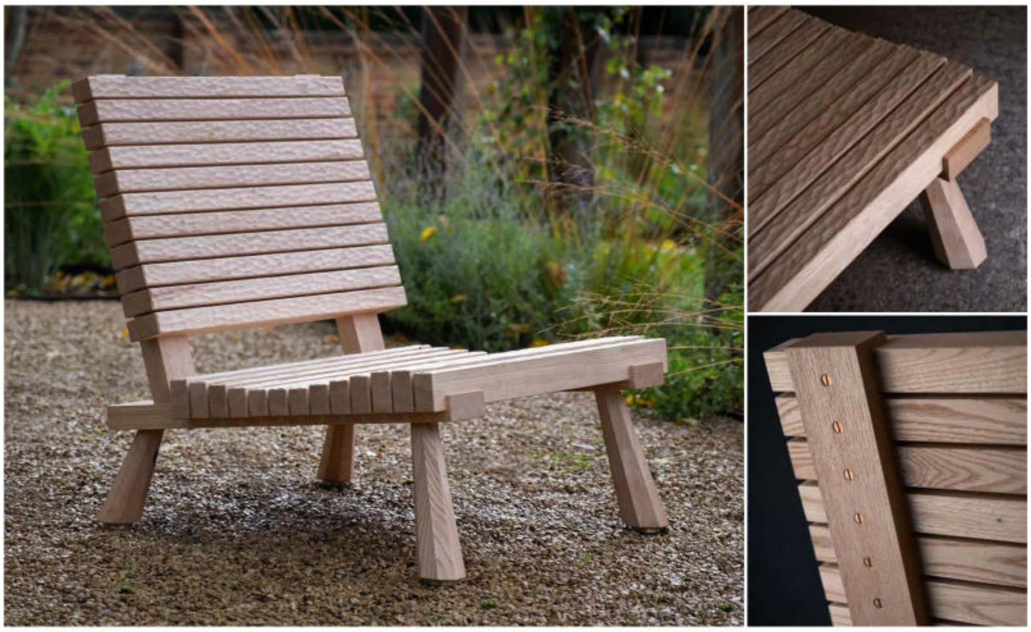
Rowena Moore – East Sussex

Gartenart Swimming Ponds
Unit 112 Screenworks, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2EF
020 7183 3333 www.gartenart.co.uk

So, you're feeling feelings of unrequited love in a grand hallway adorned with statues and their strategically placed fig leaves.

Then you're going to want **Red Ochre.**

AkzoNobel
HERITAGE
DURABLE LUXURY PAINT
VELVET MATT
Finest soft to touch matt emulsion for interior walls
RED OCHRE
Dulux
AkzoNobel
IT'S A FEELING



FURNITURE

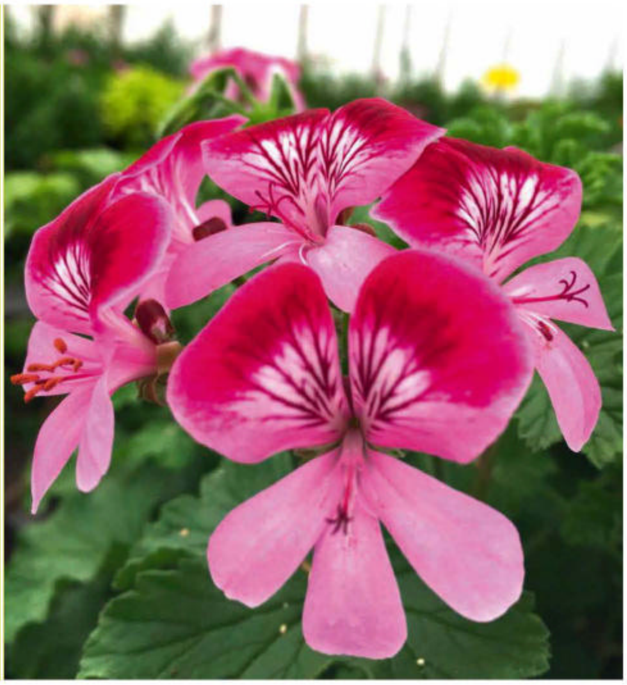
SITTING COMFORTABLY

Garden design duo Harriet Farlam and Ben Chandler of studio Farlam & Chandler have collaborated with bespoke furniture maker Bibbings & Hensby to create a stylish low garden chair. The Stave Garden Chair combines sleek design with high levels of craftsmanship. Made from sweet chestnut, which is especially resistant to the elements, with bronze fixings, the chair will withstand prolonged exposure to the British climate and develop a rich, pleasing patina over time. Available in both sweet chestnut, which costs £3,450, or fumed sweet chestnut, for £3,850. Both prices are exclusive of VAT. **bibbings-hensby.co.uk**

PLANTS

Fresh start for Fibrex

When, at the end of 2022, the former owners of Fibrex Nurseries announced their retirement, pelargonium lovers across the country were left feeling bereft. Luckily, the Worcestershire nursery was bought by Ed Boers and Laura Whiley, who will be reopening the nursery to the public from 3 May, and will be sending out their first pelargoniums from the start of this month. Alongside old favourites, the pair have added some exciting new cultivars into the mix, including Pelargonium *'Gemstone' (right).* ***fibrex.co.uk***

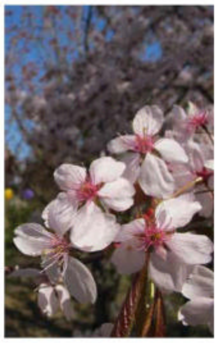


WHAT TO DO IN… *APRIL*

11

Sustainable Gardening

Learn to garden working hand in hand with nature. Thursday 11 April, 11am-1pm. £62. West Green House Gardens, Thackham's Lane, nr Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hampshire RG27 8JB. Tel 01252 844611, **westgreenhouse.co.uk**

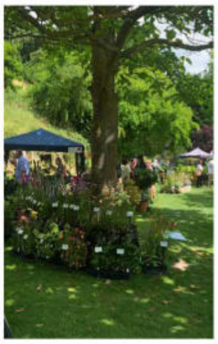


13

Hanami Blossom Day

Discover Japanese art and culture among the blossoming orchards at Brogdale Farm. Saturday 13 April, 10am-3pm. £15. Brogdale Collections, Brogdale Farm, Faversham, Kent ME13 8XZ. Tel 01795 536250, **brogdalecollections.org**

PAUL SEABORNE



21

Spring Plant Fair

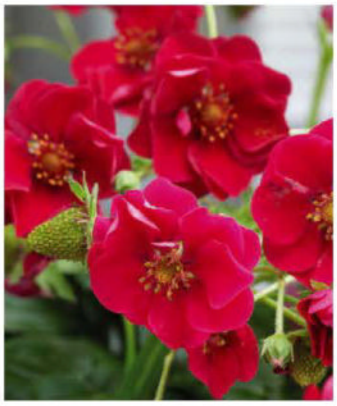
Browse a range of nurseries at Arundel Castle at the spring plant fair of the Plant Fairs Roadshow. Sunday 21 April, 10am-5pm. £5. Arundel Castle, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9AB. Tel 01903 882173, **plantfairsroadshow.co.uk**

RHS / JASON INGRAM

DESIGN

New planting for Rosemoor

Award-winning landscape designer Jo Thompson has designed an expansion to the Winter Garden at RHS Garden Rosemoor in Devon. The new design will double the size of the Winter Garden – low-level planting will allow for vistas across the garden and island beds will bring colour and interest in the form of herbaceous plants and grasses. Mature trees, such as *Fraxinus profunda*, and birch trees will sit alongside Japanese maples to provide instant impact. The space will be designed to change colour with the seasons, with peak interest being reached in winter. Planting is expected to start in autumn 2024. Find out more at **rhs.org.uk**



PLANTS

PRETTY IN PINK

Now there's a hint of spring in the air, it's time to give thought to summer fruits, and Suttons has introduced a new cultivar to its flavoursome range of strawberries. *Fragaria* x *ananassa* 'Summer Breeze Rose' offers a long-lasting display of double red-pink blooms that look as good as the fruits taste. Plants cost £19.99 for six 9cm pots. **suttons.co.uk**

OUT & ABOUT

Spring change

If you've never taken the opportunity to look round the Kitchen Garden at Chiswick House & Gardens, then make this spring the time you finally pay a visit. Not only is the previously ticketed walled garden, which dates back to the 17th century, now free for visitors to explore, but throughout April the productive garden will be home to a glorious display of daffodils and tulips including *Tulipa* 'Groenland', *T.* 'Apricot Pride' and *T.* 'Menton.' Open Thursday to Sunday, 10.30am-3.30pm, until 27 October. **chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk**

STUART MILNE PHOTOGRAPHY

3 FOR THE GARDEN…

RIDE-ON MOWERS

EASY RIDER
Alpina AT4 84 A Lawn Tractor,
£2,591.59, lineonline,
lineonline.co.uk

SMOOTH OPERATOR
Mountfield MTF 84M Petrol Ride-on Lawnmower,
£2,359, B&Q,
diy.com

TOP GEAR
John Deere X350R Lawn Tractor,
£6,879, Just Lawnmowers,
justlawnmowers.co.uk

To find a wider selection of mowers, scan the QR code with your phone camera, or visit **gardensillustrated.com/rideonmower**

GRAND
DESIGNS
MAGAZINE
APPROVED PREMIUM
PARTNER

Your Garden
Your Dream
Your Elite Garden Studio

At Elite Garden Studios, we believe that your garden is more than just outdoor space; it's an opportunity to cultivate something extraordinary. Nestled within nature's embrace, our garden rooms are more than structures; they are the canvas for your imagination, the sanctuary of your dreams, and the embodiment of refined living.

ELITE
GARDEN STUDIOS

- HOME OFFICE
- SMALL BUSINESS
- HOME GYM
- MUSIC STUDIO
- TEENAGE DEN
- GAMES ROOM
- HOME CINEMA
- ENTERTAINING SPACE

www.elitegardenstudios.co.uk Tel: 0333 900 2222
Eton House, Eton Hill Road, Manchester, M26 2ZT

Hello
Spring!
25% off

Let the joy begin.

We're spreading the joy and kicking off the growing season by offering you **25% off** all plants and seeds when you **use code ALL25** at checkout.*

Shop with Crocus, the most trusted online gardening brand

5 year plant guarantee

★ Rated Excellent by over 50,000 customers on Trustpilot

Shop at crocus.co.uk

crocus

Making beautiful possible

Visit www.crocus.co.uk and use code ALL25 at checkout. Code is valid until 23:59 on Sunday 30th June. Offer valid on full price plants only and only one code can be used per order. Not valid against items already discounted or on previous orders. Standard delivery charges apply.

NEW SPECIAL ISSUE

A *GARDENS ILLUSTRATED* SPECIAL EDITION

Make your garden shine 365 days a year

Discover the plants the experts grow with our new seasonal guide

£12.99 WITH 2 PACKETS OF SEED*

TION WITH 2 PACKETS OF SEED
GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED
A YEAR OF PLANTS
Discover what the experts grow
248 BEAUTIFUL IDEAS FOR YOUR BORDERS
TOP PICKS FOR
Early flowers
Scented blooms
Shady spots
Autumn foliage
Winter colour
PLANTS FOR EVERY SEASON
MAKE YOUR GARDEN SHINE 365 DAYS A YEAR

A Year of Plants is a beautiful, comprehensive guide to the best flowers, shrubs, trees, bulbs and foliage plants for colour and interest in every season. This new edition for 2024 contains more than 245 plants, divided into the key growing seasons of spring, early summer, late summer, autumn and winter.

DISCOVER TOP PLANTS FOR:
- Early flowers
- Show-stopping scent
- Long-lasting summer blooms
- Tricky shady spots
- Fiery autumn foliage
- Winter colour

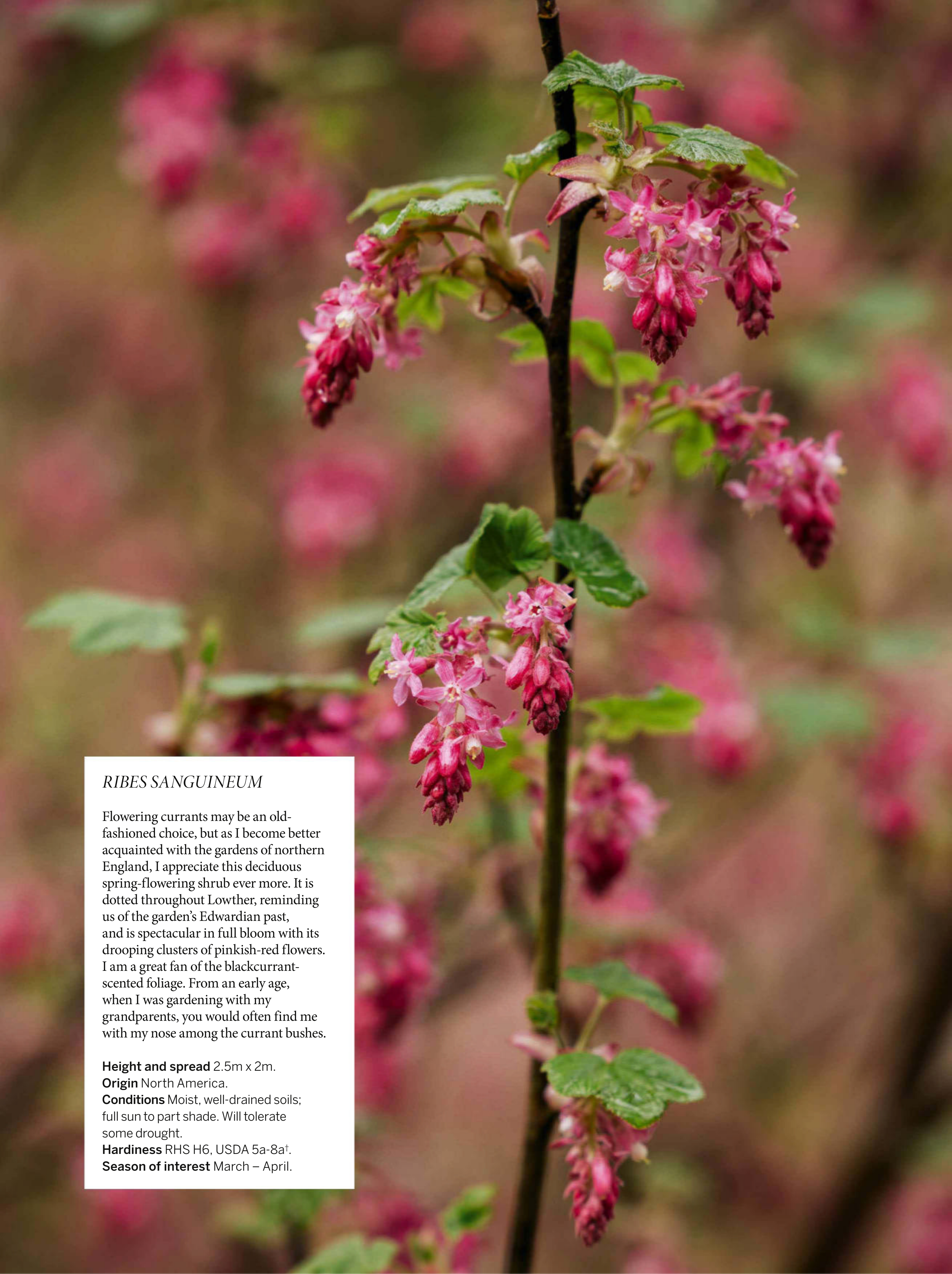
A Year of Plants is a valuable must-keep guide you can reference again and again. For a glorious garden all year, pre-order your copy today for just £12.99, including two packets of seed*.

SCAN ME

Order your copy today

Scan the QR code or order online at ourmediashop.com/ayearofplants
Or call us on 03330 162114† and quote 'A Year Of Plants'

*Price applies to UK orders only. Seeds available to UK readers only, excluding Northern Ireland. Overseas prices, including postage, are £14.99 for Europe and £15.99 for Rest of World. All orders subject to availability. *A Year of Plants 2024* will be on sale from 16 April 2024 and copies will be mailed from this date. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.
†UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed-line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free-minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of inclusive or free-call packages, call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open 8am-6pm, Monday to Friday, and 9am-1pm Saturday.



RIBES SANGUINEUM

Flowering currants may be an old-fashioned choice, but as I become better acquainted with the gardens of northern England, I appreciate this deciduous spring-flowering shrub ever more. It is dotted throughout Lowther, reminding us of the garden's Edwardian past, and is spectacular in full bloom with its drooping clusters of pinkish-red flowers. I am a great fan of the blackcurrant-scented foliage. From an early age, when I was gardening with my grandparents, you would often find me with my nose among the currant bushes.

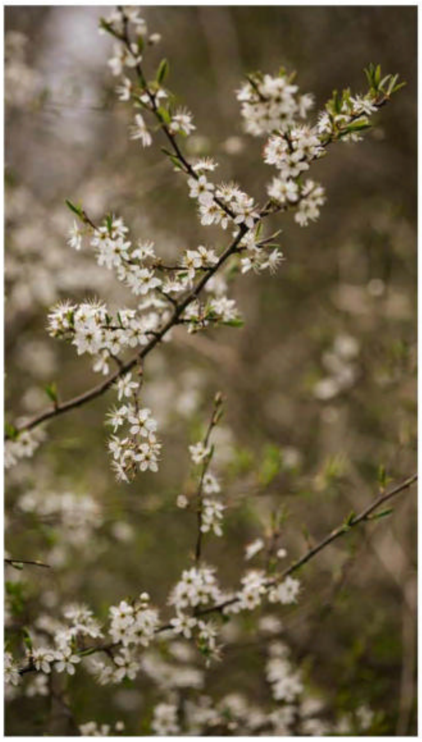
Height and spread 2.5m x 2m.
Origin North America.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soils; full sun to part shade. Will tolerate some drought.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 5a-8a†.
Season of interest March – April.

Andrea Brunsendorf is head gardener at Lowther Castle & Gardens in Cumbria **lowthercastle.org**

April plants

As spring takes hold, Lowther's head gardener **Andrea Brunsendorf** takes pleasure in the garden's bright groundcover plants and an abundance of fragrant blossom

PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MAYBURY



PRUNUS SPINOSA

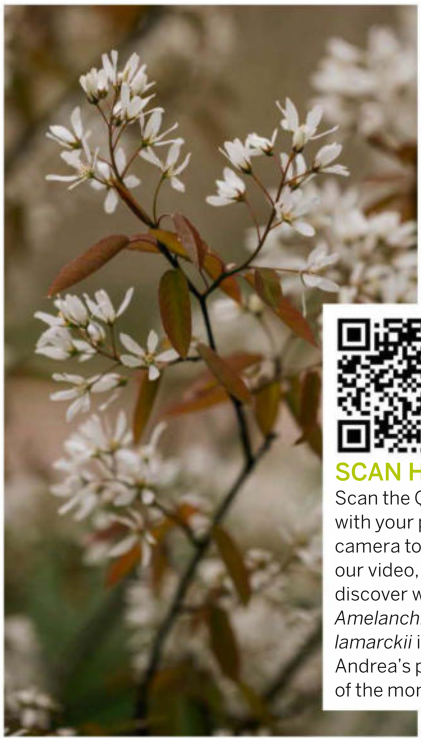
A blackthorn in full bloom, with its clouds of snow-white flowers, always takes my breath away. If you leave a blackthorn whip unclipped, it will become a beautiful, small, spiny, free-standing tree that is extremely valuable to wildlife throughout the year. Its flowers offer early nectar and pollen; the small narrow leaves are a food source for many caterpillars and the impenetrable thicket-like habit provides nesting opportunities and shelter. The damson-like fruits, known as sloes, feed birds and, of course, flavour gin.

Height and spread 5m x 4m.
Origin Europe, including Great Britain, North Africa and Western Asia.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soils of all types; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest March – April (flowers); September onwards (fruit).

CARDAMINE PENTAPHYLLOS

I enjoy growing this compact, clump-forming perennial in the castle's ruin, where it catches the eye of visitors with its dense heads of deep pinkish-purple flowers every spring. What makes me slightly chuckle about it here at Lowther, where summer temperatures average around 18°C, is that all physical evidence of this plant still disappears below the ground – a clever evolutionary survival strategy to cope with the hot summers in its native central Europe. An excellent woodlander that blends in with everything. AGM*.

Height and spread 45cm x 45cm.
Origin Western to Central Europe.
Conditions Moist, well-drained, organically rich soils; part to full shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.
Season of interest March – May.



SCAN HERE
Scan the QR code with your phone camera to watch our video, and discover why *Amelanchier* x *lamarckii* is Andrea's plant of the month.

AMELANCHIER X LAMARCKII

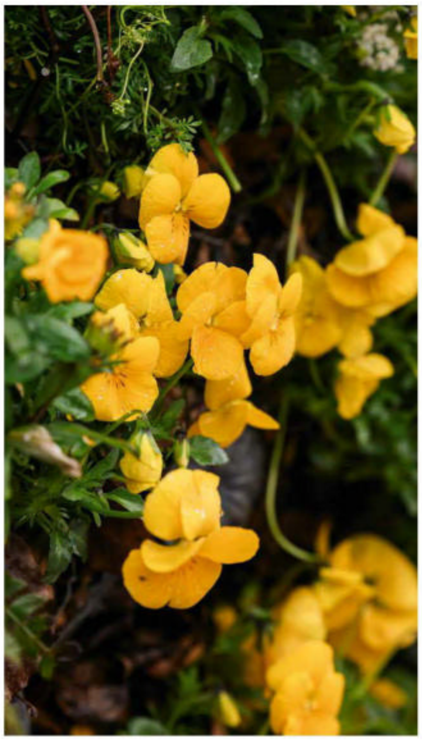
I've adored this deciduous tree for a long time, seeing it first in Germany, where it has become naturalised. Known as the snowy mespilus, it has a charming spring appeal, long clusters of fragrant, white flowers interspersed with delicate, purplish foliage that assumes rich autumnal tints later on. Birds are highly fond of its sweet, reddish-black berries in early summer. The berries make a good jam or pie if you have enough patience to forage a meaningful quantity, and you can get to them before the birds. AGM.

Height and spread 8m x 8m.
Origin North America.
Conditions Moist, well-drained, organically rich, preferably slightly acidic, soils; full sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest April (blossom); June (berries); September – October (foliage).

---

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

In my first spring at Lowther, I fell for our old, multi-stemmed goat willow, *Salix caprea*, with its silhouette outlined by a yellow halo



VIOLA GRANDISSIMO SERIES CLEAR YELLOW FLOWERED

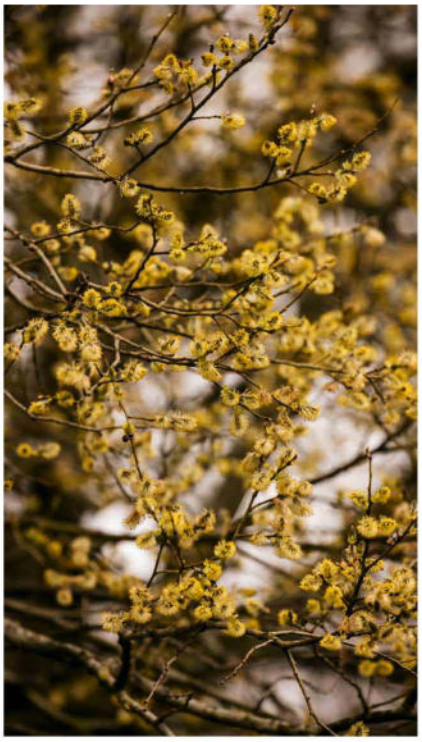
Spring is a slow-burn affair in the Lake District, taking a while to ignite. By April, you get quite hungry for some colour to lighten up those grey and predominantly rainy days. There are numerous cultivars of the annual bedding plant horned viola, and all put a smile on my face every time, especially this bright-yellow form. It can withstand plenty of rain, freezing temperatures, sudden snowfalls and the summer heat. I plant it in containers by the back door, as a top layer for later-flowering tulips, to cheer us into spring.

Height and spread 15cm x 20cm.
Origin Garden origin.
Conditions Moist, well-drained, organically rich soil (or multi-purpose potting compost); sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.
Season of interest Late autumn – spring.

SALIX CAPREA

In my first spring at Lowther, I fell for our old, multi-stemmed goat willow with its silhouette outlined by a yellow halo. On a sunny, spring day, this native tree comes alive with bees foraging the large golden male catkins for pollen. It might be too much of a wild choice. However, its palpable foliage supports numerous caterpillars of moths and butterflies, including the elusive purple emperor. Now, most willows are dioecious, and the female flowers are not pretty; source a male plant to cut flowering stems for a spring bouquet.

Height and spread 12m x 8m.
Origin Europe to northeast Asia.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soils; full sun to part shade. Will tolerate some drought.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest April.



NARCISSUS 'JACK SNIPE'

This is an old cultivar that is rather charming with its small, slightly drooping single heads made up of reflexed white petals and a short yellow trumpet on an elegant stem. At Lowther, we are naturalising it along the fringes of our Yew Avenue meadows as it takes part shade and doesn't mind a little more moisture than most daffodils. For this cultivar, I like to see some distance between the individual bulbs and groups for that romantic look, or *verloren* as we say in Germany, which appeals to me. It is also a pretty cut flower. AGM.

Height and spread 30cm x 10cm.
Origin Garden origin.
Conditions Well-drainied soils (recommended for most acid soils); sun to part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.
Season of interest March – April.

New 2024 Brochure
now available
GABRIEL ASH
The RHS Portico
Made with Pride in the Cotswolds

If you love your garden, you'll know it takes time and care to create something truly wonderful.

That's why we put our faith in traditional joinery techniques such as mortise and tenon joints to give our greenhouses strength and integrity. Using only the highest quality Western Red Cedar, handcrafted in our Cotswold workshops. No wonder Gabriel Ash are the only timber greenhouses endorsed by the RHS.

Our Classic Freestanding Greenhouses, Coldframes & Accessories are available to buy online. See us at selected independent Garden Centres and RHS Gardens.

For a Free Brochure call 01242 662926 or visit www.gabrielash.com.

®The Royal Horticultural Society.
Trade marks of
The Royal Horticultural Society
(Registered Charity No 222879/
SC038262) used under licence
from RHS Enterprises Limited.

GA
GABRIEL ASH

Endorsed by
RHS

Trustpilot ★★★★★
Mar 2024

Harrod
HORTICULTURAL

UK MANUFACTURING 70 YEARS SINCE 1954

0333 400 1500 • www.harrodhorticultural.com
10% OFF QUOTE: 24ADGL1

SCAN HERE

Scilla siberica is the best squill to naturalise, rapidly establishing sweeping drifts under deciduous trees in moist, lightly shaded meadows

CORYLOPSIS GLABRESCENS

Before this fragrant winter-hazel develops its broad summer foliage, it catches both the eye and nose with its perfect pale-yellow tassels made of tiny cup-shaped flowers and its primrose scent. This wide, multi-stemmed shrub is best set against an evergreen backdrop or under an open canopy of birches, cherries or pines. Providing shelter from those cheeky late-spring frosts allows you to appreciate its qualities, including its glorious golden autumn colour, for longer. AGM.

Height and spread 8m x 4m.
Origin Japan.
Conditions Moist, well-drained, organically rich soils, preferably slightly acidic; part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.
Season of interest April (flowers), September – November (foliage).

FLOWERPHOTOS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

SCILLA SIBERICA

This squill is a reliable hardy bulb with dainty spikes bearing up to five nodding, bell-shaped flowers in intense shades of blue. It is the best squill to naturalise, rapidly establishing sweeping drifts under deciduous shrubs and trees in moist, lightly shaded meadows or lean lawns. It looks great in the company of other spring-flowering bulbs, including crocuses and early flowering daffodils, and I like to use it in well-established perennial borders, creating an early groundcover of sheer joy and rivalling those tiresome winter weeds. AGM.

Height and spread 8cm x 15cm.
Origin Southwest Russia to northwest Iran.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soils; best in part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 2a-8b.
Season of interest March – April.

PACHYPHRAGMA MACROPHYLLUM

This unassuming perennial is an ideal herbaceous underplanting for deciduous trees and shrubs, forming an attractive carpet with large, round, overlapping semi-evergreen leaves, about 10cm across. It suppresses weeds superbly and brightens up the early garden with its masses of rock-cress-like white flowers. It also complements other spring-flowering plants, such as dog's tooth violets, or the fresh greens of fern fronds. It is an underrated must-have for any shady spot and is easy to grow from seed. AGM.

Height and spread 40cm x 45cm.
Origin Northeast Turkey, Caucasus.
Conditions Moist, organically rich soils; part to full shade. Drought-tolerant once established.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.
Season of interest March – May.

Watch the video

Award-winning
outdoor furniture

BarlowTyrie
Est 1920

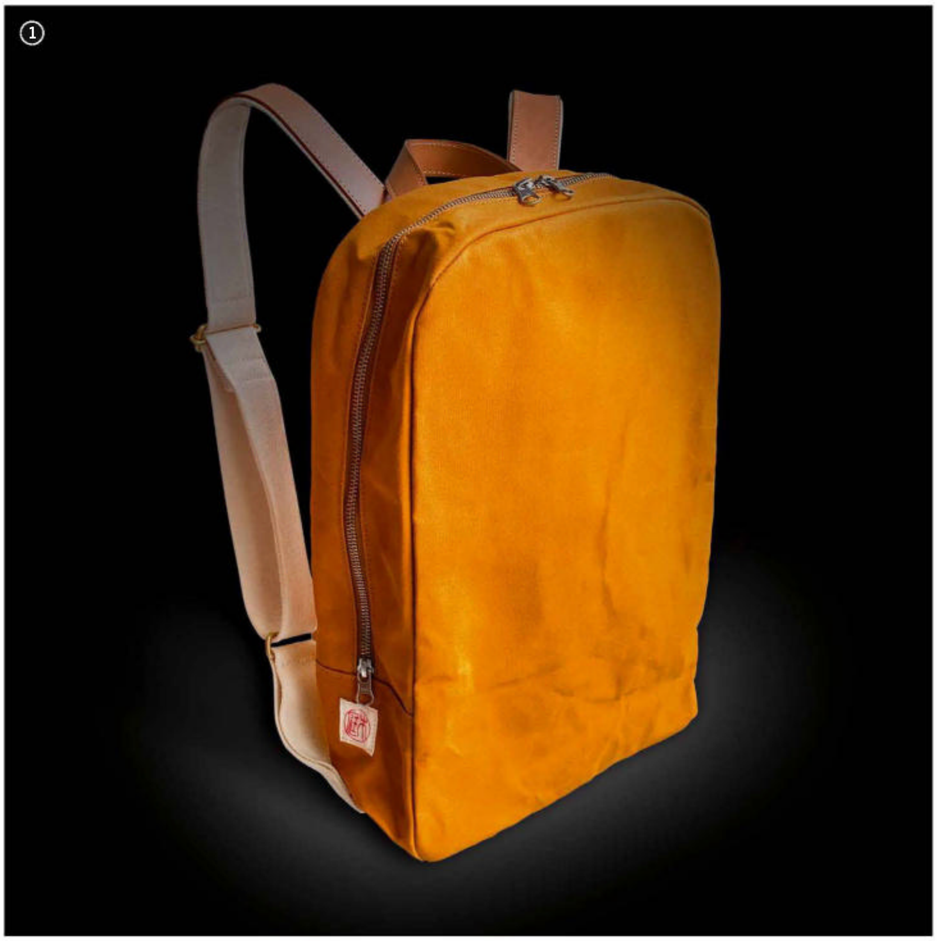
RHS
Show Exhibitor 2024
RHS Chelsea Flower Show

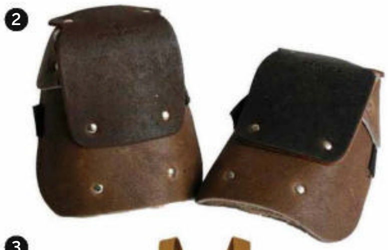
www.teak.com

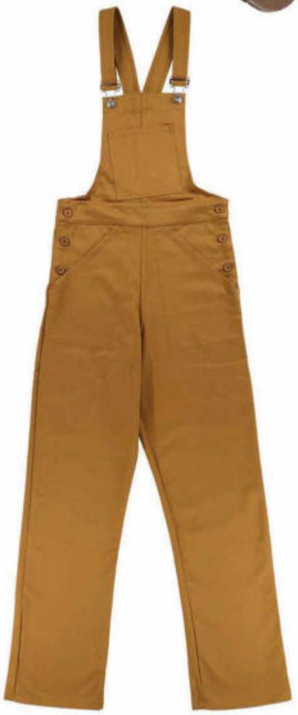
KITTED OUT

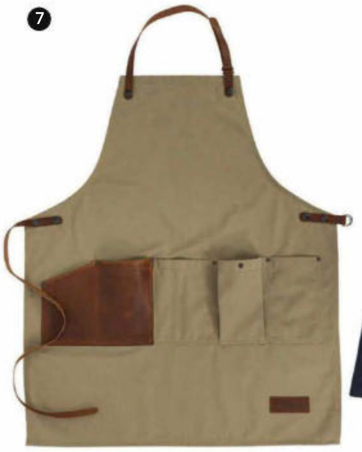
Stylish wear for working in the garden, whatever the weather

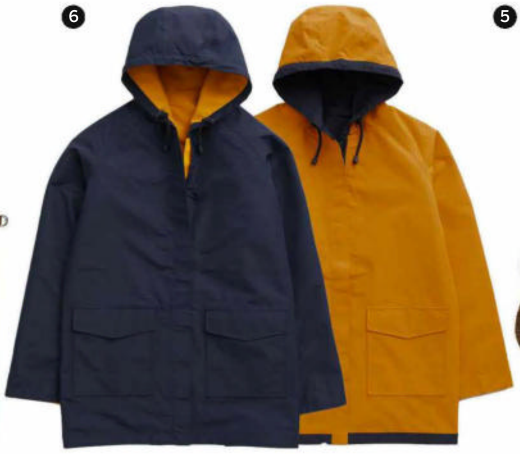
COMPILED BY MOLLY BLAIR

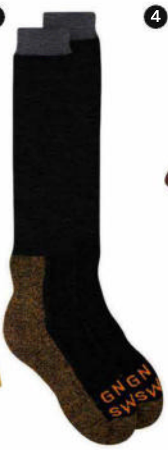

①

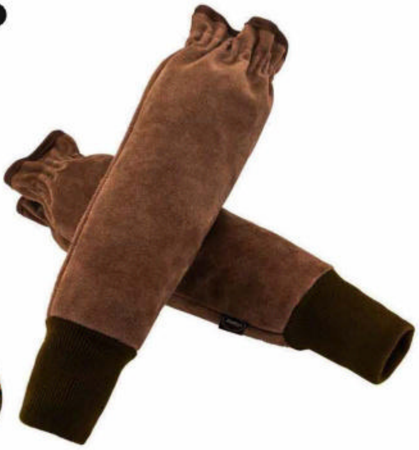
②


③


⑦


⑥


⑤


④


1. Niwaki Nizyu Kano Rucksack, Karashi yellow, £229, 01747 445059, niwaki.com **2. Leather Knee Pads,** £45, 0345 605 2505, worm.co.uk **3. Women's Dungarees,** cotton drill, tan, £107, 01328 820699, carriercompany.co.uk **4. Rose Pruning Sleeves,** heritage brown, £45, 01902 376300, davidaustinroses.co.uk **5. GS Merino Wool Long Walking Ski Sock Charcoal,** £30, 01279 927015, genevievesweeney.com **6. The Reversible Waterproof Raincoat,** sunglow, £99.95, 01326 640075, seasaltcornwall.com **7. The Artisan Apron,** khaki canvas, £145, 01743 588180, risdonandrisdon.co.uk

①

②

③

④

⑦

⑥

⑤

1. Bobbi Ankle Wellington Boot, Oxford blue and tan, £84.95, uk.merrypeople.com **2. Merino Neckwarmer,** dark navy, £35, 020 3617 1166, genus.gs **3. Cotton Linen Poplin Apron Dress,** wax green, £185, 0333 400 5200, toa.st **4. CHPO Anna Recycled Plastic Milky Tea Sunglasses,** UV400 protection rating, £30, 0300 123 2025, shop.nationaltrust.org.uk **5. Niwaki Kojima Work Jacket,** denim, £289, 01747 445059, niwaki.com **6. Women's Farne Crew Neck Knit Jumper,** Merino wool, dark olive, £125, 01872 554481, finisterre.com **7. Kimmeridge Large Tote Bag,** canvas and leather, £40, 01993 845559, gardentrading.co.uk

PREMIUM BATTERY TOOLS. FROM STIHL.

ONE BATTERY. MANY TOOLS.

Cut, mow, saw or clear around the garden with STIHL‘s AK System battery-powered tools. German engineering combined with powerful performance and just one battery which fits every tool.

Discover our range of premium garden tools at your nearest STIHL Approved Dealer or at **www.stihl.co.uk**

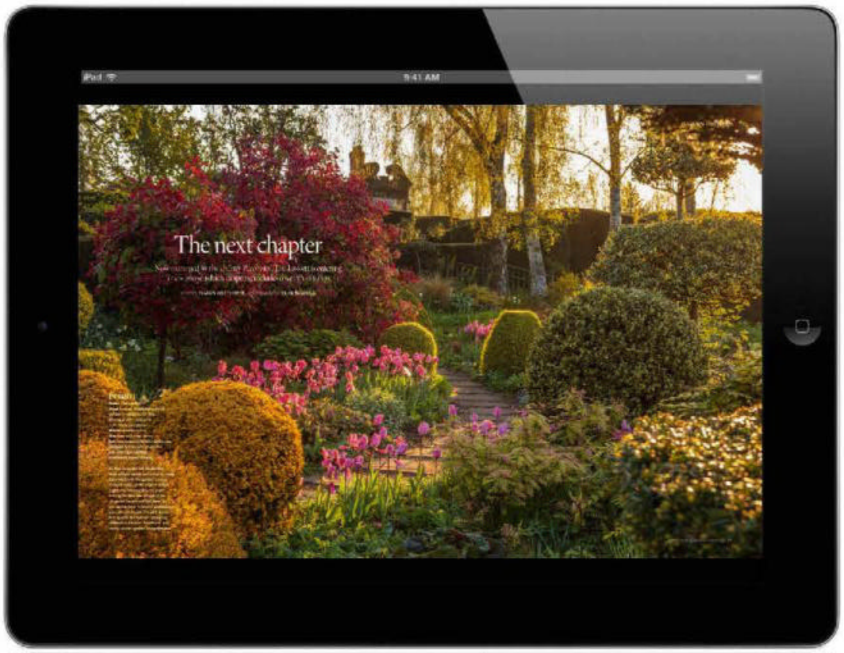
AK SYSTEM

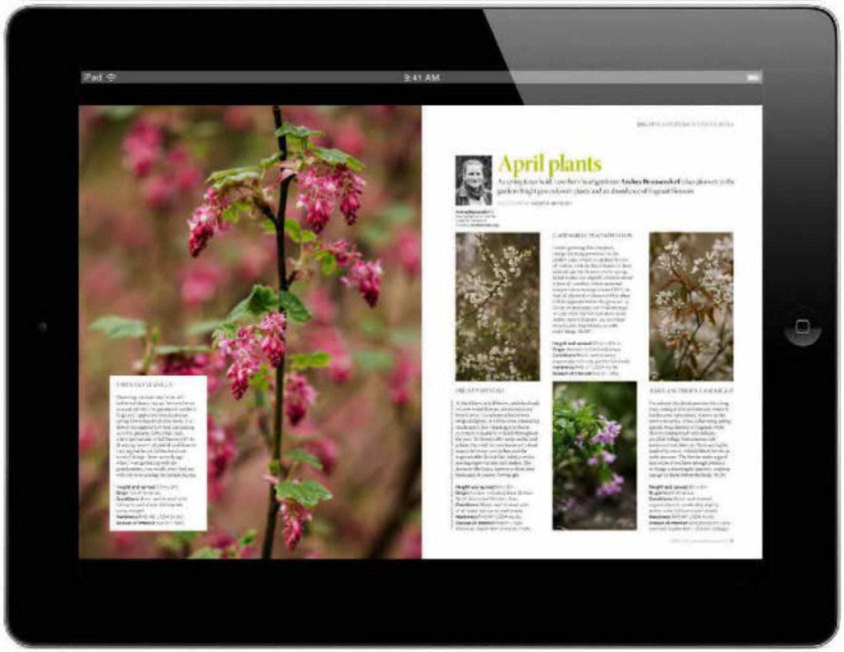
BATTERY POWER. BY STIHL.

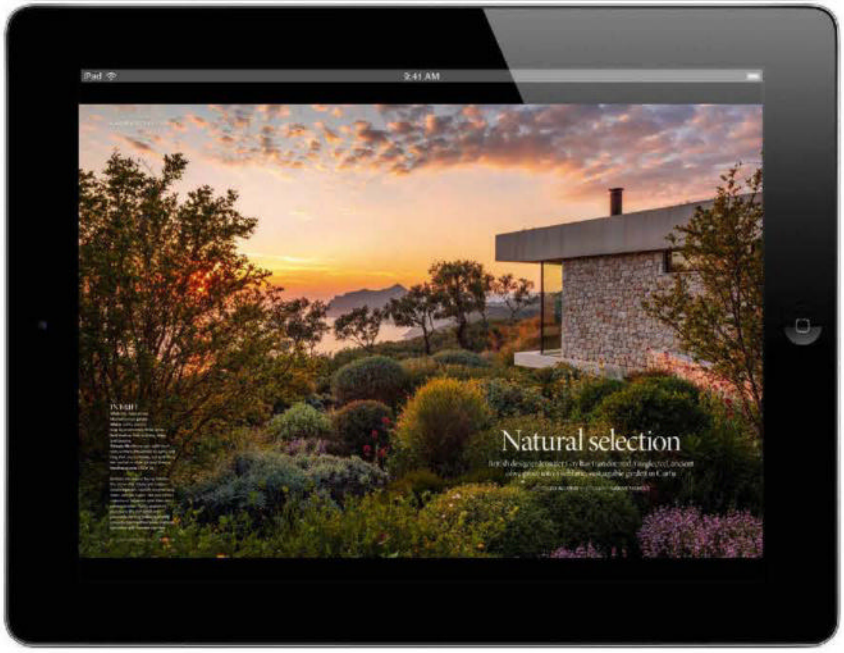
GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

Save when you subscribe to the digital edition

GARDEN PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR
GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED
Bring on
spring
The best plants to grow now
Tulip fever
Brilliant bulbs in a country garden
Problem solvers
Top picks for wet and shady spots
DO LESS, GET MORE
The trick to going low maintenance


The next chapter


April plants


Natural selection

A must-have read for passionate gardeners, *Gardens Illustrated* magazine provides a unique insight into the world's most beautiful gardens, expert advice and planting ideas.

ENJOY OUR PREMIUM APP EXPERIENCE NOW

buysubscriptions.com/
gardensillustrated

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google play

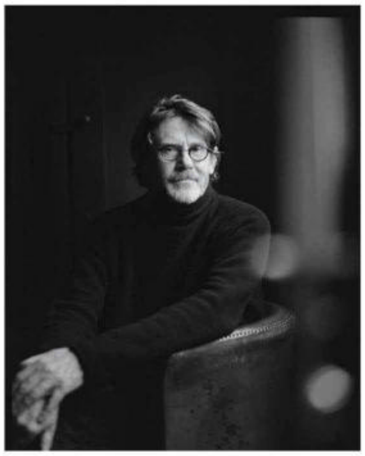
amazon apps
Available on
kindle fire

Loxley Grey Matt Stone Effect Outdoor Porcelain

MANDARIN STONE

NATURAL STONE | PORCELAIN | DECORATIVE TILES
15 INSPIRATIONAL UK SHOWROOMS

mandarinstone.com



TRY, TRY AGAIN

The question of what to grow this year has **Nigel Slater** thinking back on past failures and hoping wildly for the future

ILLUSTRATION **PAUL WEARING** PORTRAIT **JENNY ZARINS**

My plans, it turned out, were naïve. My small, thin box of a garden was to have a simple palette of dark-green bones with occasional flashes of white. The 'bones' were yew, ivy and hornbeam. The white flashes were to be *Ammi majus*, cosmos and roses. I ordered an avalanche of snow-white brunnera, some climbing roses and a pair of white *Paeonia rockii* from a trusted specialist, and waited.

My careful plans started to unravel as soon as some of those white brunnera turned out to be blue and the roses sported distinctly yellow buds before the white petals unfolded. To rub salt into the wound, the peonies took three years to flower and their four voluptuous, ball-gown blossoms showed up as a rather loud magenta. The white garden was clearly beyond this amateur gardener.

I moved on, slightly embarrassed, to an early summer palette of apricot, orange and deep wine-red. The introduction of colour was going well until I was seduced by pink roses with names as sweet as their perfume and realised I had also inherited my father's love of carnival-coloured dahlias; a mixture that even in the most careful of horticultural hands could look like a nursery school's playroom. Getting colour right (whatever that may mean) is somehow more crucial in a small garden because there are no corners to turn. Your eye has no choice but to take in the entire garden, successes and mistakes, in one glance.

The brick walls of the house are painted a rusty orange, which would be the perfect backdrop for burgundy-petalled *Rosa* 'Souvenir du Docteur Jamain' and *Dahlia* 'Chat Noir'. Yet I remain in a constant dilemma about how far to go with introducing colour into what is a rather uptight garden.

'Apricot, white, deep wine-red' has become something of a personal garden mantra, but also a belt that feels tighter by the year; but then, don't they all? Should this be the summer I let in a little

> Will this be the summer I finally have raindrops sitting in the folds of my hosta leaves, or can I see the slugs unfurling their napkins?

▷ yellow or purple, already so successful in spring? Perhaps in the form of *Achillea filipendulina* 'Gold Plate' or the nostalgic *Aster* x *frikartii* 'Mönch'. Sadly, the sight of purple and yellow within six feet of each other makes this gardener queasy. I am now leaning in the direction of the richer ochre and purple tones of *Achillea* 'Inca Gold' and *Aster amellus* 'King George'. But still I worry.

I am learning that the colour choices that please and those that grate are often only a few spins of the colour wheel away from one another. The welcome hue of a wild primrose or *Rosa banksiae* is just a short jump from the rather strident *Primula* 'Showstopper Yellow' or *Rosa* 'Arthur Bell', both of which I would probably be tempted to 'deadhead' while still in bud. And why is it I have such deep affection for *Rosa* Graham Thomas (= 'Ausmas') or the trusty *Dahlia* 'David Howard', yet cannot countenance *Dahlia* 'Penhill Yellow Queen'? I am wondering too, why do bold and bright dahlias get let off the hook so easily, like naughty children allowed to run riot in the library? Screeching yellow aside, the dahlias' exuberance is always welcome.

The application of more colour is right at the top of my ever-increasing garden 'to do' list, but not far behind is my second dilemma, the 'let's try again' list: plants that I would love to have here but that have previously not worked. Is it worth having another go, I ask myself. The collection contains many all-time favourites, including the Benton irises, single hollyhocks, martagon lilies, lupins and hostas, and curiously, even phlox and asters – all usually reliable, but ones that have let me down time and again. Failing with Michaelmas daisies feels rather like a life-long cook admitting they can't make a Victoria sponge. And yet I do fail, annually.

I could write my disasters off for good, but what to do when you love something so much? The soft, powdery scent of phlox is such an integral ingredient of my happiest childhood memories and I am frustrated at my own lack of success in growing it, especially as it is hardly a troublesome plant for most gardeners. I can't help thinking that maybe this will be the year phlox 'Monica Lynden-Bell' has a change of heart and decides my urban space is the place for her.

But there is a reason to 'have another go'. The garden has subtly changed over time, and change brings opportunities. Last winter's removal of a large part of my towering *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia' and its soft, spreading canopy has delivered new light into a previously dark patch of garden, providing an opportunity for sun-loving plants that hadn't worked before. Even more reason to experiment with a pale crocosmia, or perhaps *Oenothera lindheimeri* with its swaying, pink-and-white butterfly flowers.

And I must have one more go with my horticultural nemesis. I've probably shed more tears over hostas than any other garden plant. Every time I introduce their softly rippled, blue-green leaves, they are savaged by slugs within hours, despite the latest 'miracle' preventative of egg shells, coffee grounds or expensively introduced nematodes. I am excited by the thought of *Hosta* 'Halcyon', which I have never grown before. But before I get carried away, I remember that similar cultivars have previously been treated as a running buffet by every slug and snail in the neighbourhood. Will this be the summer I finally have deep raindrops sitting in the folds of my perfect hosta leaves, or can I see the slugs unfurling their napkins already? "Come on everyone, he's having another go. Dinner is served." □

GARDEN MASTERCLASS

Curated by garden designer Annie Guilfoyle and horticulturalist Noel Kingsbury, Garden Masterclass is a unique education portal for garden and landscape people.

Our tutors include: Prof. James Hitchmough; Charlie Harpur; Prof. Nigel Dunnett, Dr. Noel Kingsbury; Tom & Sue Stuart-Smith; Caroline Jackson, Midori Shintani; Annie Guilfoyle; Jason Ingram; John Little; Richard Scott; Marco Scano; Julia Crawford; Maurice Foster; Dan Pearson and Troy Scott-Smith.

Many events both live and online go to
gardenmasterclass.org/diary
or email info@gardenmasterclass.org

SUPPORTED BY
ALITEX™
GREENHOUSES AND CONSERVATORIES

The
ENGLISH GARDENING SCHOOL
ESTABLISHED 1983
- CHELSEA -

ONE YEAR GOOD GARDENING DIPLOMA
September 2024 – beginning July 2025 – BOOKING NOW

Covers the best in planting design while training in the more serious aspects of horticultural techniques. Practical sessions held at Arundel Castle under the guidance of head gardener Martin Duncan and at Sandhill Farm House, Rogate. Lectures by many leading gardening personalities and regular visits to outstanding private gardens. Students also learn to draw up planting plans.
(1 day a week (Tues), 10.30am–3.15pm, over three terms)

THE ESSENTIAL GARDEN DESIGN DIPLOMA
January – March 2025 – BOOKING NOW

Based at the Chelsea Physic Garden and led by Rosemary Alexander and architect Catriona Rowbotham, the course is an overview of Garden Design, covering all the elements needed to rethink an average garden. Taking students step by step through site surveying, using the grid, horizontal and vertical features, garden layouts and planting plans, costing and specification, plus drawing tuition and homework on design and plant portfolios. Tutors are well respected in the industry and will guide students on how to succeed in this diverse profession.
(2 days a week (Wed & Thu), 10.30am–3.15pm, plus 2 days homework)

GARDENING FOR BEGINNERS
April 2025

One of our most popular courses, led by master horticulturist Ben Pope, which aims to take each student through all the practical elements of caring for a garden from soil, tools, maintenance, seed sowing and propagating, weed control and pests and diseases. The first 3 days will be spent with lectures at the Chelsea Physic Garden and the final day will be spent gaining practical experience in Rosemary Alexander's much praised garden near Petersfield and another private garden nearby, where Ben is in charge. Participants will be given a chance to prune, plant, sow seeds and regular maintenance tasks will be discussed. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided daily.

GARDEN DESIGN & CARING FOR YOUR GARDEN
Distance Learning Courses study anytime, anywhere in the world

A stepping stone to a new career. These two correspondence courses are a step by step guide to either designing your own garden or learning how to plant and maintain an existing garden: drawing up plans, hard landscaping, site analysis, planting, month by month tasks etc. Taught through a comprehensive course book, with projects submitted to us. (*1-3 years to complete and individual assessment)*

Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden Photo: R Alexander

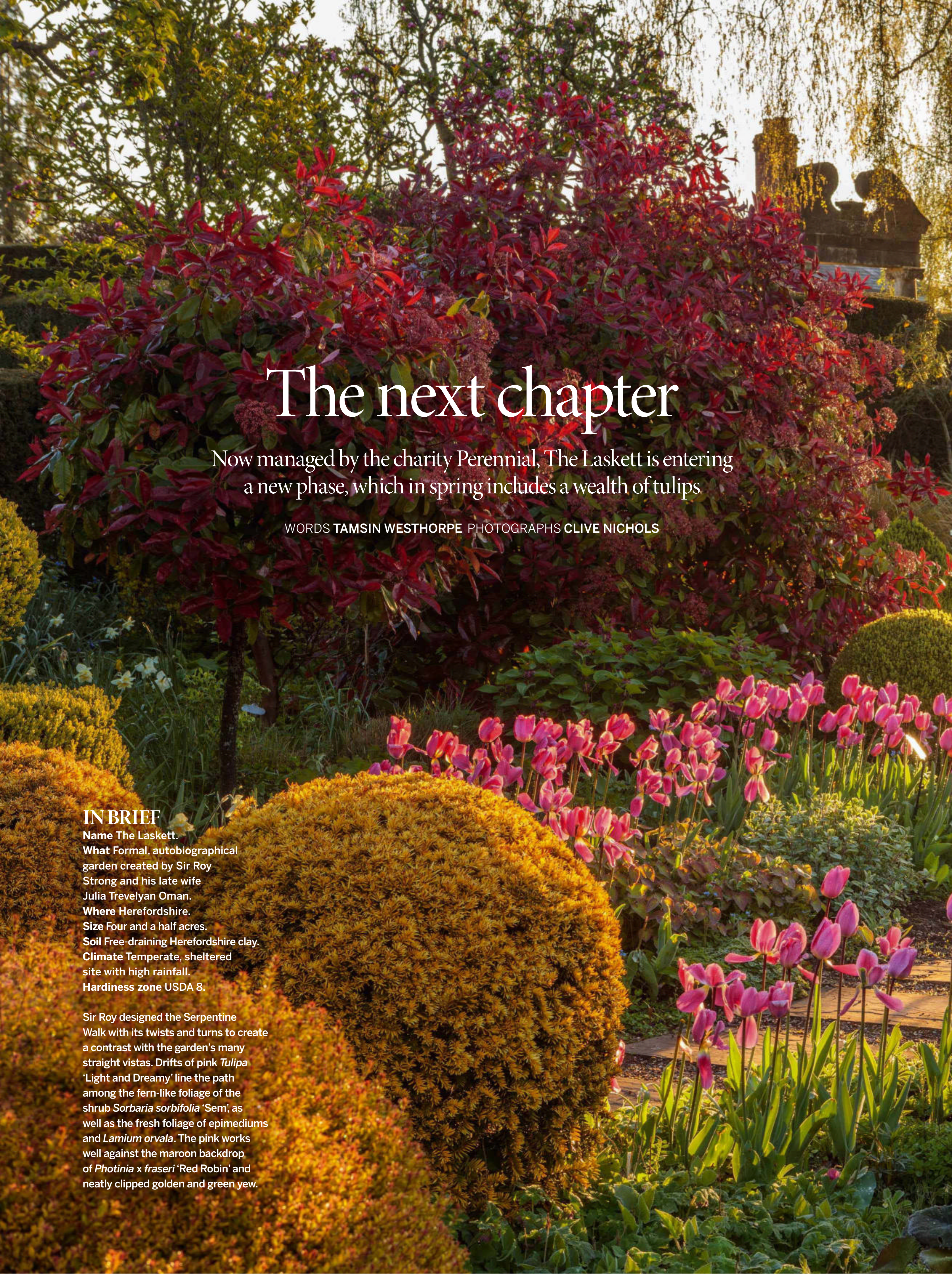
Not sure which Diploma course is for you? We prefer potential students to attend an Information Session when Rosemary explains the course and you can see our work space.

JUST CONTACT US TO SET UP A DATE & TIME

www.englishgardeningschool.co.uk
Email: info@englishgardeningschool.co.uk
Tel: 01730 818373

Long established as the leader in gardening tuition
Based at the unique and historic Chelsea Physic Garden

follow us on Instagram



The next chapter

Now managed by the charity Perennial, The Laskett is entering a new phase, which in spring includes a wealth of tulips.

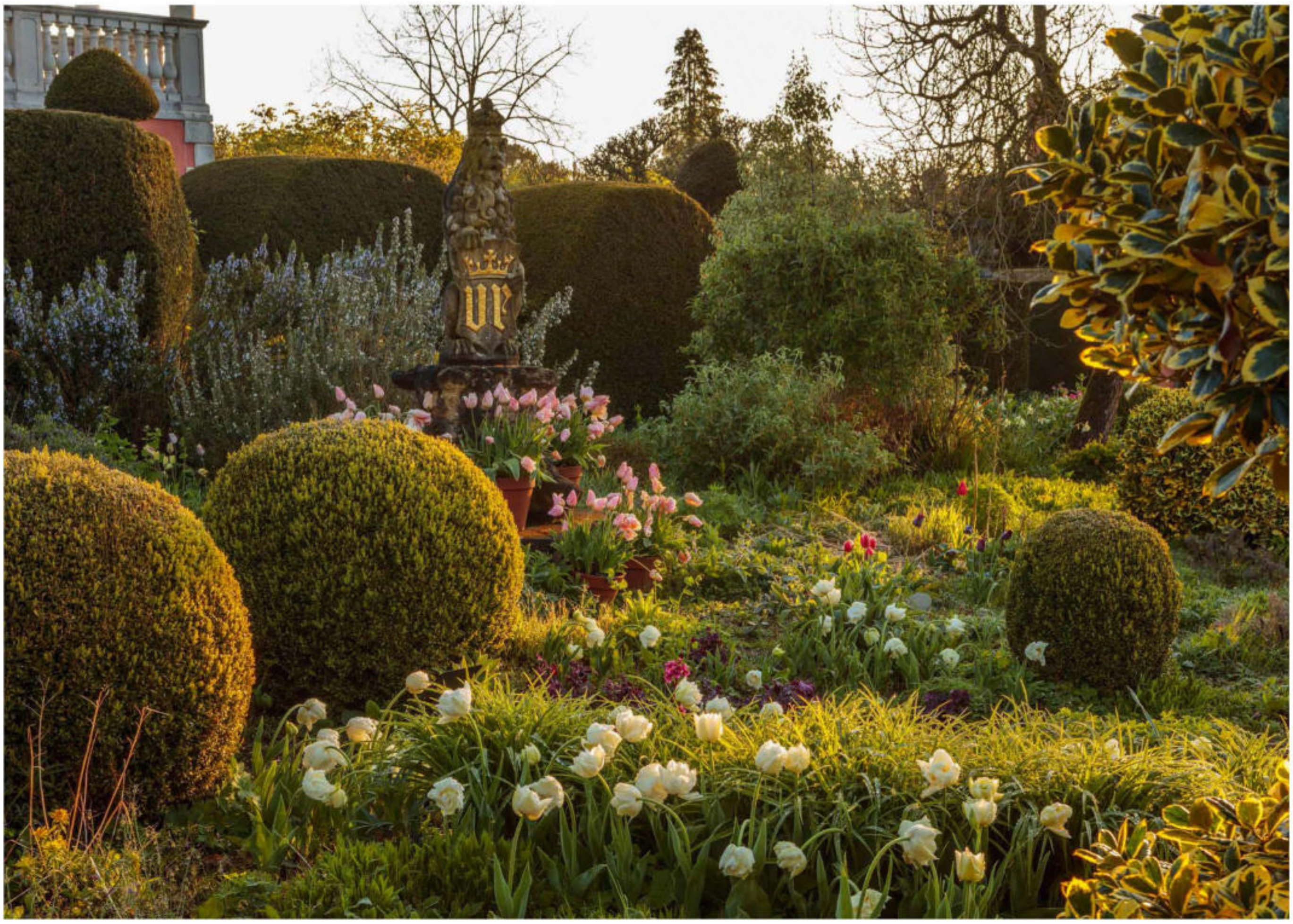
WORDS **TAMSIN WESTHORPE** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLIVE NICHOLS**

IN BRIEF

Name The Laskett.
What Formal, autobiographical garden created by Sir Roy Strong and his late wife Julia Trevelyan Oman.
Where Herefordshire.
Size Four and a half acres.
Soil Free-draining Herefordshire clay.
Climate Temperate, sheltered site with high rainfall.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Sir Roy designed the Serpentine Walk with its twists and turns to create a contrast with the garden's many straight vistas. Drifts of pink *Tulipa* 'Light and Dreamy' line the path among the fern-like foliage of the shrub *Sorbaria sorbifolia* 'Sem', as well as the fresh foliage of epimediums and *Lamium orvala*. The pink works well against the maroon backdrop of *Photinia x fraseri* 'Red Robin' and neatly clipped golden and green yew.

It is surprising how few tulips you need; using one colour along a path is more effective than a mix



When an author creates a garden, you'd expect it to tell a story, but Sir Roy Strong's famously autobiographical garden The Laskett is more of a library of tales than a one-off book. As you weave your way through the garden, you meet statuary and features that stop you in your tracks, each one with purpose and meaning. It's such an elaborate space, you might think you are looking at a Renaissance garden, not one that started its journey in 1973.

The names of the individual gardens offer as much intrigue as the planting, with Colonnade Court, Silver Jubilee Garden, Elizabeth Tudor Walk and The Serpentine Walk. There are few open views but plenty of vistas that draw you further in. To put the intricacy of this garden into perspective: it takes six months to clip the topiary.

It was created from nothing by Sir Roy Strong and his late wife Julia Trevelyan Oman. Julia had a distinguished career as a set designer and Sir Roy is an art historian, writer, broadcaster and served as director of both the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum. They were always determined that it would be a place of constant change, and now a new chapter has been added to the story. In 2020, Sir Roy gave his hugely personal home and garden to the charity Perennial, which offers essential support and advice to those working in horticulture.

The Laskett is one of three gardens cared for by the charity, and is now in the care of senior gardener James Madge and garden manager David Wyndham Lewis. Both come with armfuls of experience: James having previously worked at the National Trust's Cliveden Garden in Buckinghamshire; and David as head gardener of Kensington Roof Gardens. "The biggest challenge we have is trying to look after the garden without losing the spirit of the place," David explains.

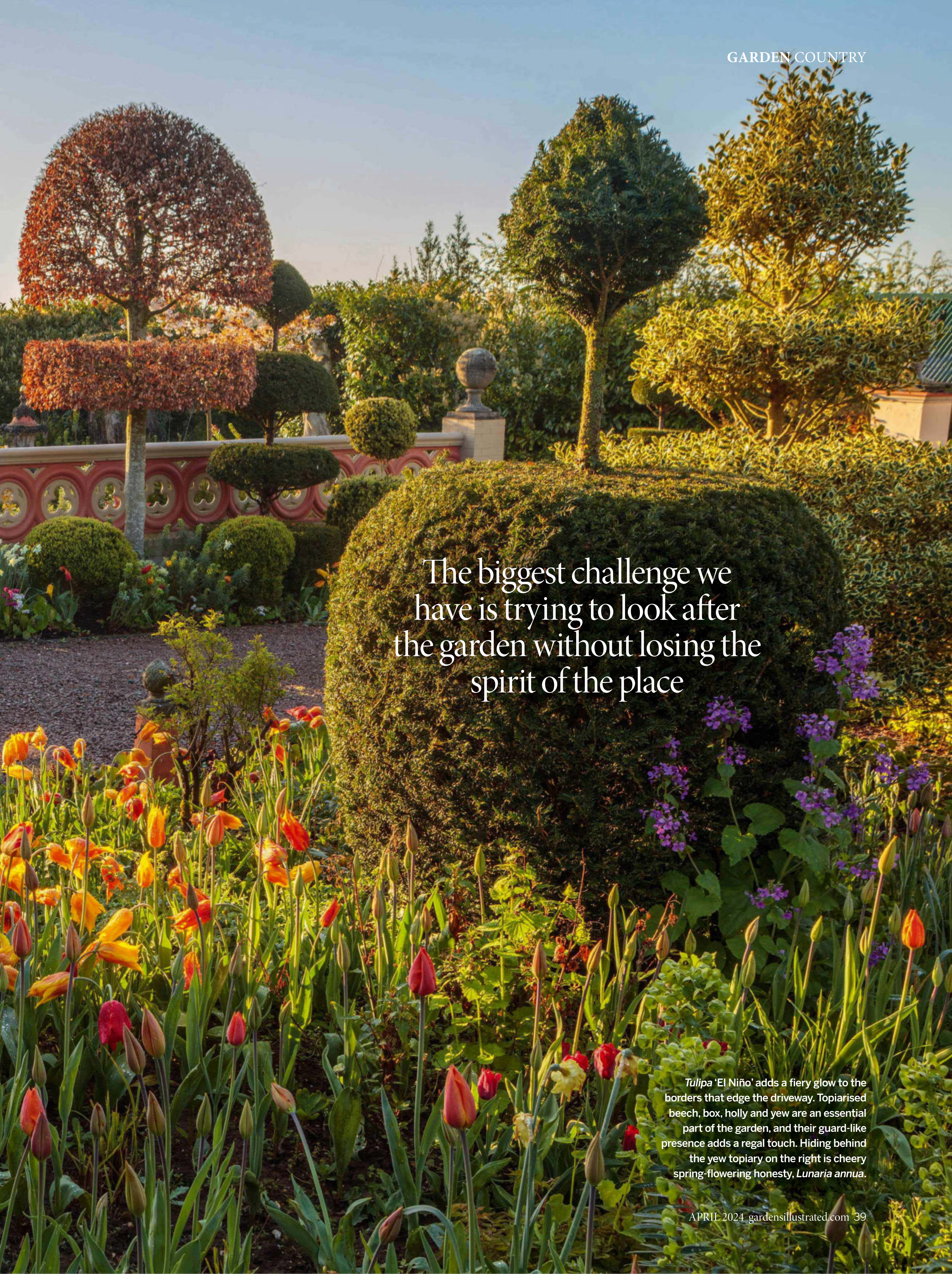
It's essential that this garden attracts new visitors and one way of doing this has been to add more tulips for spring interest. "Sir Roy had 'Golden Apeldoorn' in front of the house, and in the Silver Jubilee Garden, 'Ballerina' and 'Très Chic' – these are all reliable tulips, so we have stuck with these," says James. "With 19 willing volunteers, we planted 25,000 bulbs last autumn. We had a great system that involved laying out and then planting. The borders and 440 pots took two weeks to plant."

The tulips at The Laskett are bought from various suppliers including J Parker's, Peter ▷

To continue turn to page 41

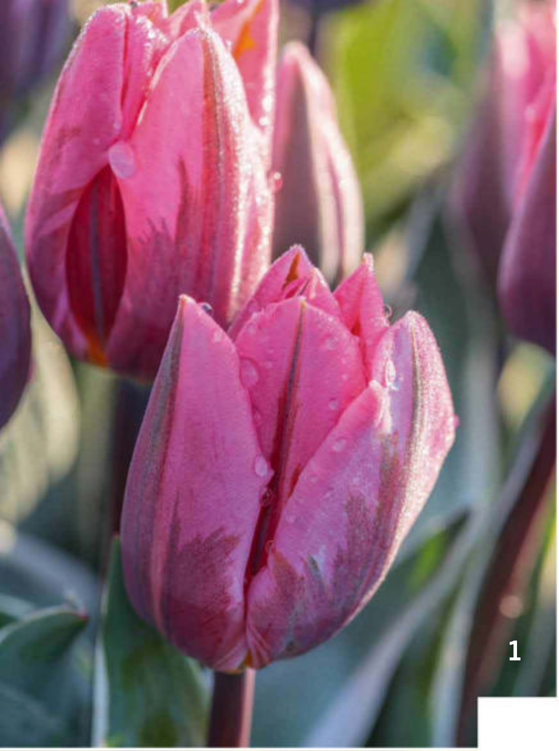
Left The curves and abundant planting of the Serpentine Walk create a contrast to the sharp lines of the box, holly and yew topiary. Among the formal topiary, a statue of Britannia acts as a focal point, while in the foreground a mix of shade-loving plants are joined in spring by more *Tulipa* 'Light and Dreamy'.

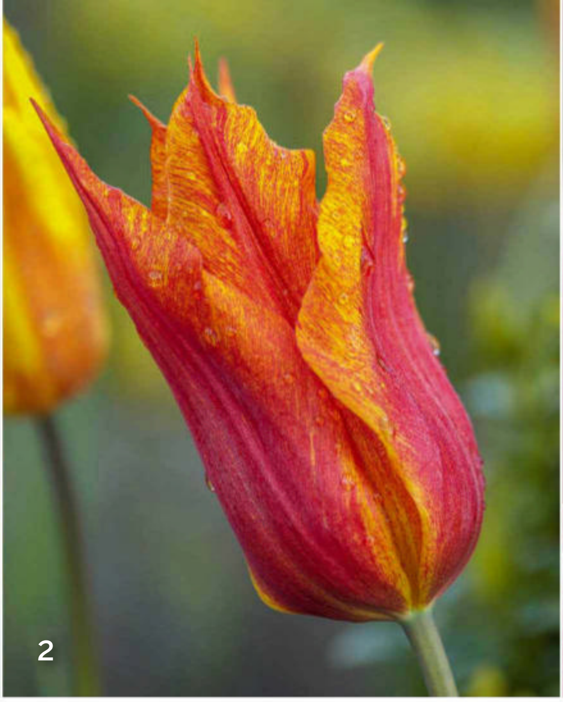
Above Further along the Serpentine Walk, a Lion statue, which came from the Houses of Parliament, creates another point of focus. Its raised plinth is surrounded by pots of *Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty' while in the foreground is the early double-white *Tulipa* 'Mondial'.

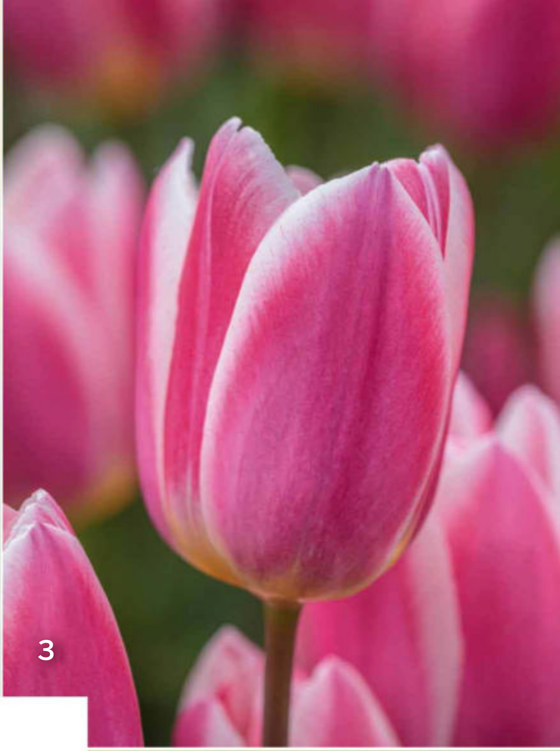


> The biggest challenge we have is trying to look after the garden without losing the spirit of the place

Tulipa 'El Niño' adds a fiery glow to the borders that edge the driveway. Topiarised beech, box, holly and yew are an essential part of the garden, and their guard-like presence adds a regal touch. Hiding behind the yew topiary on the right is cheery spring-flowering honesty, *Lunaria annua*.


1


2


3

8 tulips from The Laskett

1 ***Tulipa* 'Pretty Princess'** Rose-pink-coloured petals, each of which has a deep-magenta flame running up it. A robust tulip that offers a generous length of flowering. Height and spread: 35cm x 10cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b[†].

2 ***Tulipa* 'El Niño'** A real statement flower, with no two flowers looking the same. A blend of orange and yellow petals from this single, late-flowering tulip. A good height. 65cm x 10cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

3 ***Tulipa* 'Light and Dreamy'** A delicate pink with a flash of purple and a slightly orange base to the petals. A mid- to late-season tulip from the Darwin Hybrid Group. 50cm x 15cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

4 ***Tulipa* 'Golden Apeldoorn'** This was an original choice of Sir Roy's. A reliable Darwin hybrid tulip with perfect cup-shaped, yellow blooms. A generous height. 50cm x 15cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

5 ***Tulipa* 'Grand Perfection'** A classic-looking tulip that you'd expect to see in a Dutch painting from the 18th century. Show-stopping red and cream petals. 40cm x 15cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

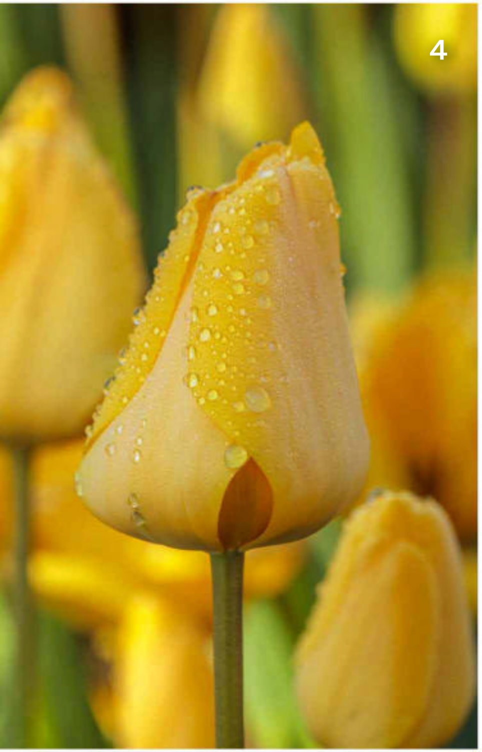
6 ***Tulipa* 'Candy Prince'** Pale-lilac blooms on sturdy stems. The foliage is slightly silvery. Works well with a deeper magenta tulip. 30cm x 10cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

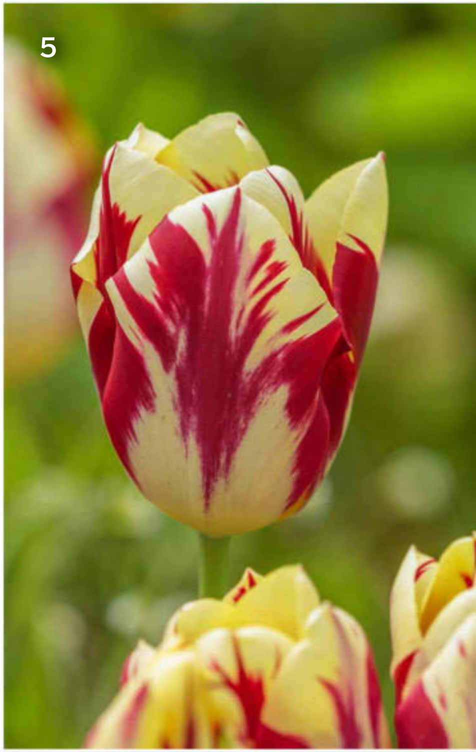
7 ***Tulipa* 'Fire Queen'** An early single tulip with orange flowers that are enhanced with a red flame effect on the petals. Works well when partnered with red acers. 40cm x 10cm. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

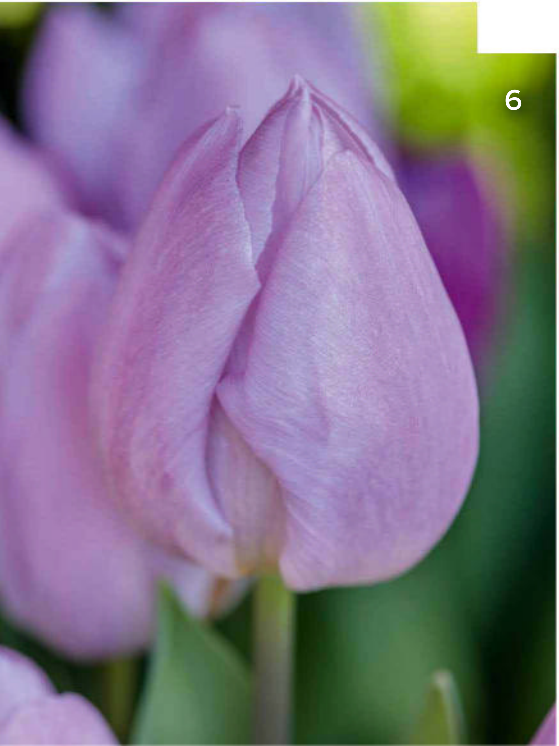
8 ***Tulipa* 'Showcase'** A big and blowsy, plum-coloured tulip with double flowers. Fairly early flowers that last for a good length of time. 40cm x 10cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

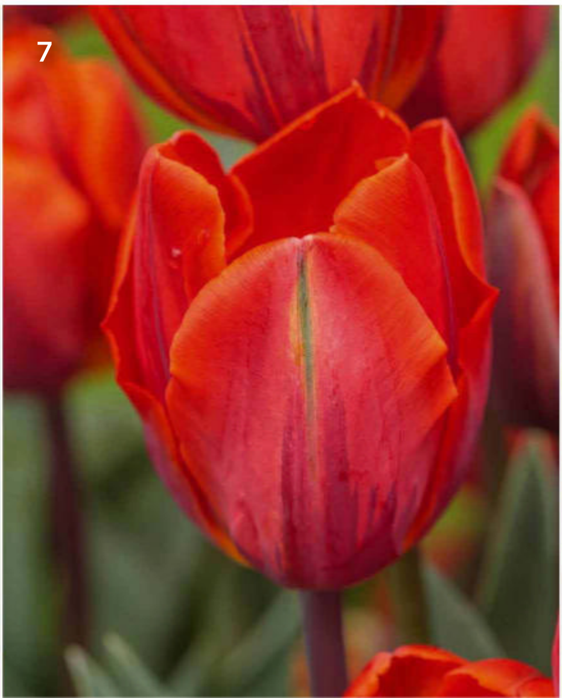
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

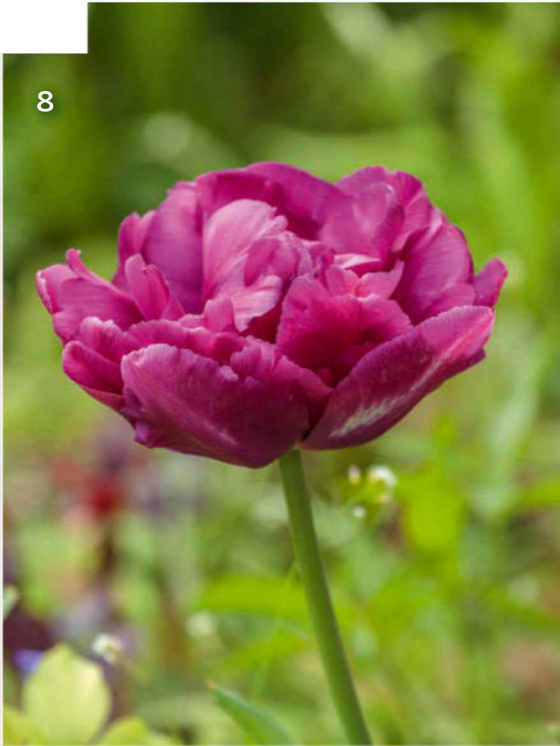
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.


4


5


6


7


8

Above In a shadier part of the Serpentine Walk, the invasive but very pretty three-cornered leek, *Allium triquetrum*, runs up the bank under the silver birch trees. Between the topiary, relaxed plantings of hellebores, grasses and yet-to-flower hardy geraniums are joined by a group of a flamboyant, double-flowering, plum-coloured *Tulipa* 'Showcase'.

▷ Nyssen and Riverside Bulbs, and planting starts in November, but James would quite happily plant as late as early February. "There is a plan on paper just in case one of us is ill at planting time," says James.

In the spirit of the storytelling ethos of the garden, tulips are chosen largely for their names. "The tulip 'Shakespeare' was swapped for 'Sonnet' as it is stronger, and the pots in the Elizabeth Tudor Walk are planted with 'Royal Virgin'," explains David. "The roses in the Rose Garden have been changed from 'Valentine' to 'Princess Alexandra of Kent', so in a nod to Roy's original rose choice we have planted tulip 'Valentine'." Making their own mark in the garden, James chose a tulip called 'Jimmy' last year, and David picked one with his surname, 'Wyndham'. However, as James reveals with a cheeky smirk, 'Wyndham' wasn't a success, so it has since been removed.

"We don't worry too much about colour, as taste is such a subjective thing," says David. "We spend more time looking at heights and flowering times. The garden is packed with spring interest and emerging spring foliage, but again, we don't worry too much about matching the tulips with existing plants."

Tulips are traditionally planted in formal blocks, but at The Laskett they are used in small drifts to highlight the journey through the garden. With such an intricate design, placing small groups of tulips along the pathways offers intrigue and adds to that sense of journey. "It is surprising how few tulips you need to achieve this," says James. "Using one colour along a path is more effective than a mix."

This less formal planting style allows for tulips to be left in place year after year, as after a time, flower heights and sizes will start to vary. "With so much structure in the garden, we can afford our tulip placement to be more relaxed," says James. Species tulips such as *T. tarda*, *T. persica* and *T. sylvestris* are reserved for the Christmas Orchard. "They work well in the lawn, adding a pop of colour on a dark day.

"Once the tulips have gone over, we deadhead them, but leave the foliage to die back. As the borders are so packed with perennials, the faded foliage is soon disguised. The bulbs aren't lifted but left in place for another year. We simply add a few more of the same each year to bulk up the display."

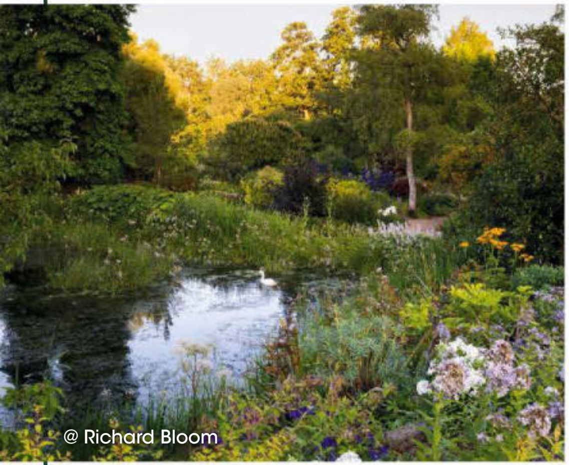
It seems that many more pages are yet to be added to the story of this garden, with the tulips set to play a leading role. ◻

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address The Laskett, Laskett Lane, Much Birch, Herefordshire HR2 8HZ. **Tel** 01432 805454. **Web** thelaskett.org.uk **Open** 20-21 April for Tulips at The Laskett, and from 4 April, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10.30am and 2.30pm, until end of October. Entry £12. Pre-booking essential.

Perennial's Gardens

By visiting you're part of a lifeline helping anyone working with plants, trees, flowers and grass.


@ Richard Bloom

@ Clive Nichols

@ Clive Nichols

Fullers Mill

fullersmill.org.uk
This award-winning garden offers unusual shrubs, perennials, lilies and marginal plants. Fresh with growth in spring, lilies begin a succession of flowering, creating a spectacular show of colour into summer. golden hues illuminate autumn days and streams sparkle in winter as snowdrops awaken.

West Stow, Bury Saint Edmunds IP28 6HD

3 April - 30 October, Wed 2pm – 5pm, Fri, Sat & Sun 11am – 5pm

The Laskett

thelaskett.org.uk
This remarkable year-round garden brings a biographical celebration of the arts to the Herefordshire countryside. A celebration of tulips proudly proclaims the arrival of spring. Summer makes a grand entrance with fantastic vistas. Theatrical topiary and architecture take centre stage in autumn.

Laskett Lane, Much Birch,
Herefordshire HR2 8HZ

2 April - 31 October, Tue & Thu, 10:30am & 2:30pm

York Gate

yorkgate.org.uk
This magical garden is brimming with garden rooms inspired by the arts and crafts movement. Colour bursts to life in spring and summer displaying tulips, tropical plants and wildflowers. Timeless structure draws the eye in autumn and winter with a masterpiece of pattern, topiary, and a finale of snowdrops.

Back Church Lane, Leeds,
West Yorkshire LS16 8DW

3 April - 31 October, Wed - Sun 10am till 4pm

For further information about Perennial and our gardens please visit **perennial.org.uk**

> *"It's hard to imagine life without beautiful gardens. We need the people behind the flowers, plants, trees and grass, and sometimes they need us."*
>
> **Alan Titchmarsh, MBE**
> **President of Perennial**

Donations and visits to our gardens give all those who work in or are retired from the horticulture industry the chance to grow their wellbeing for a brighter future.

Registered Charity Nos 1155156 | Scotland SC040180 | 115-117 Kingston Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7SU

Helping people in horticulture
Perennial

HANNAH MOORE

With training at Beth Chatto's and Wildegoose Nursery already under her belt, Hannah is currently an Elizabeth Hess Scholar at Tresco Abbey Gardens

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest gardening memory Deadheading pelargoniums with my grandmother Daphne. Carefully being taught how to hold the scissors, and working side by side.

First plant love Onions, which ironically I can't eat. I became obsessed with growing a show-sized onion after visiting a local Onion Fair with competitions for giant vegetables.

Life before gardening? I spent four years training as an apprentice coat maker at Henry Poole & Co on Savile Row and subsequently worked freelance. After years working in a basement workshop, the pull of a work life outdoors became too great to ignore.

Inspiring mentors? Jack and Laura Willgoss. I first worked at their nursery Wildegoose as a volunteer, and their passion for plants and their encouragement of me is something I will always be grateful for.

Horticultural heroes All the gardeners who show up to work on a cold January day and care for the gardens everyone else enjoys once the weather warms up.

Landscape that has influenced you A journey on the train from Palma to Sóller in Mallorca aged 12, through groves of citrus, started an obsession with citrus and the Mediterranean productive landscape and its ties with the food I love making. The scent wafting through the train windows has stayed with me.

Most valuable training I have been fortunate that all my traineeships have involved propagation. At Wildegoose and Beth Chatto's it was in equal proportion to time spent in the garden. It has been immensely useful to feel confident working with plants both ornamentally and commercially.

Best planting style Perhaps it's not a planting 'style' per se, but I love it when a garden sits well within its landscape. The line between the Abbey Garden and the sea is beautifully blurred, and at Great Dixter and Wildegoose, two of my favourite gardens, the hills around seem to run directly into the garden, the landscape lending its beauty to the already breathtaking garden.

Favourite 'weed' Spring feels truly here when cow parsley blooms. Any umbellifer is usually welcome in my garden.

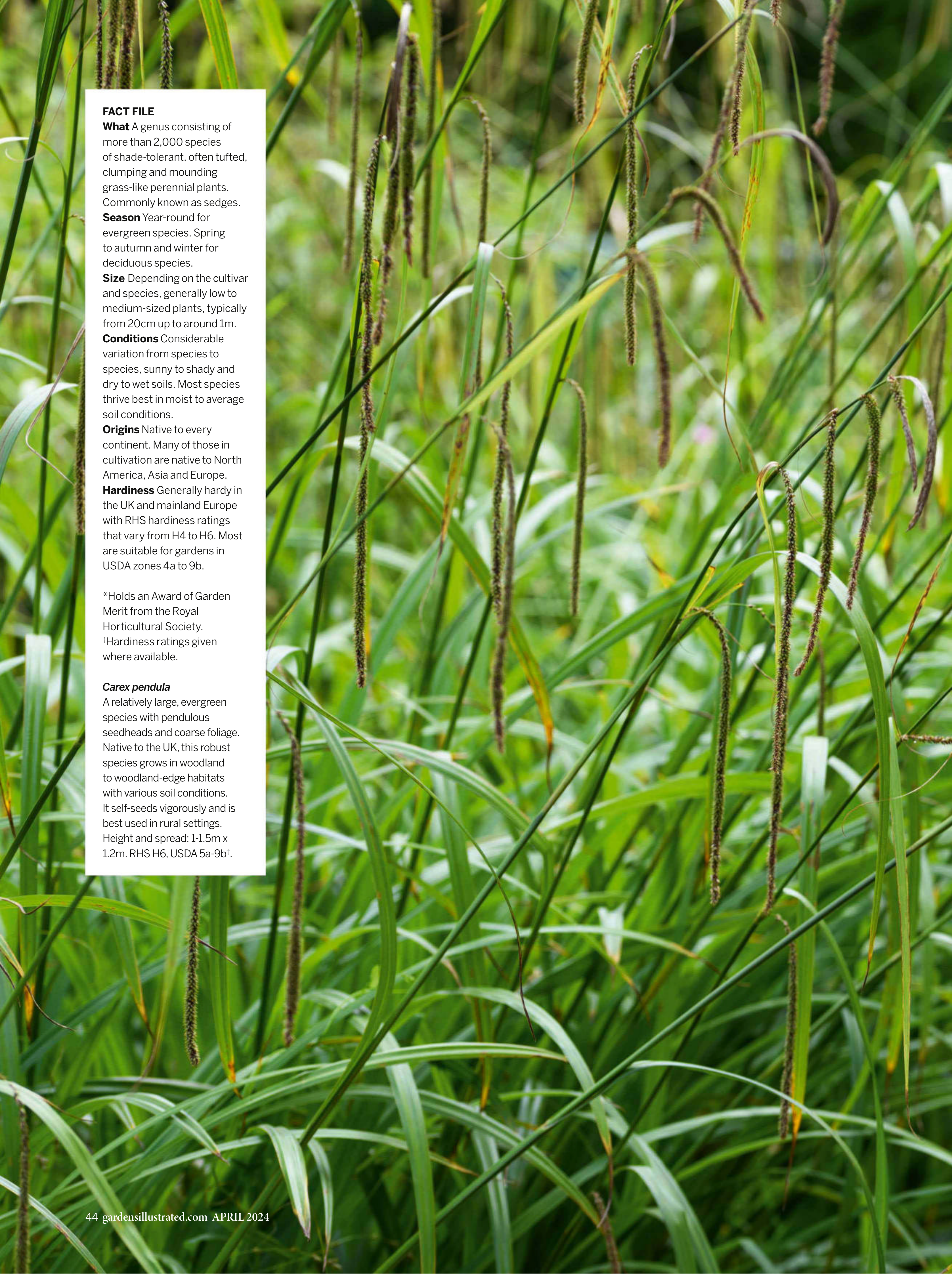
What direction do you see horticulture heading? A rethinking of what has historically been considered untidiness in gardens – seeing the beauty in a meadow, not the untidiness of long grass.

Instagram account to follow Our assistant head gardener Jon Taylor's instagram @jonotaylor84. When I leave Abbey Gardens, I'll be relying on his posts to get my Tresco fix.

Career goals? I have a particular love for Mediterranean gardens, especially those with ties to productive growing and would love to work abroad, particularly to spend more time working in Italy.

Contact moorehannahvictoria@gmail.com; @hannahvictoriamoore; tresco.co.uk

> I trained on Savile Row; after years of working in a basement, the pull of a life outdoors became too great to ignore



FACT FILE

What A genus consisting of more than 2,000 species of shade-tolerant, often tufted, clumping and mounding grass-like perennial plants. Commonly known as sedges.

Season Year-round for evergreen species. Spring to autumn and winter for deciduous species.

Size Depending on the cultivar and species, generally low to medium-sized plants, typically from 20cm up to around 1m.

Conditions Considerable variation from species to species, sunny to shady and dry to wet soils. Most species thrive best in moist to average soil conditions.

Origins Native to every continent. Many of those in cultivation are native to North America, Asia and Europe.

Hardiness Generally hardy in the UK and mainland Europe with RHS hardiness ratings that vary from H4 to H6. Most are suitable for gardens in USDA zones 4a to 9b.

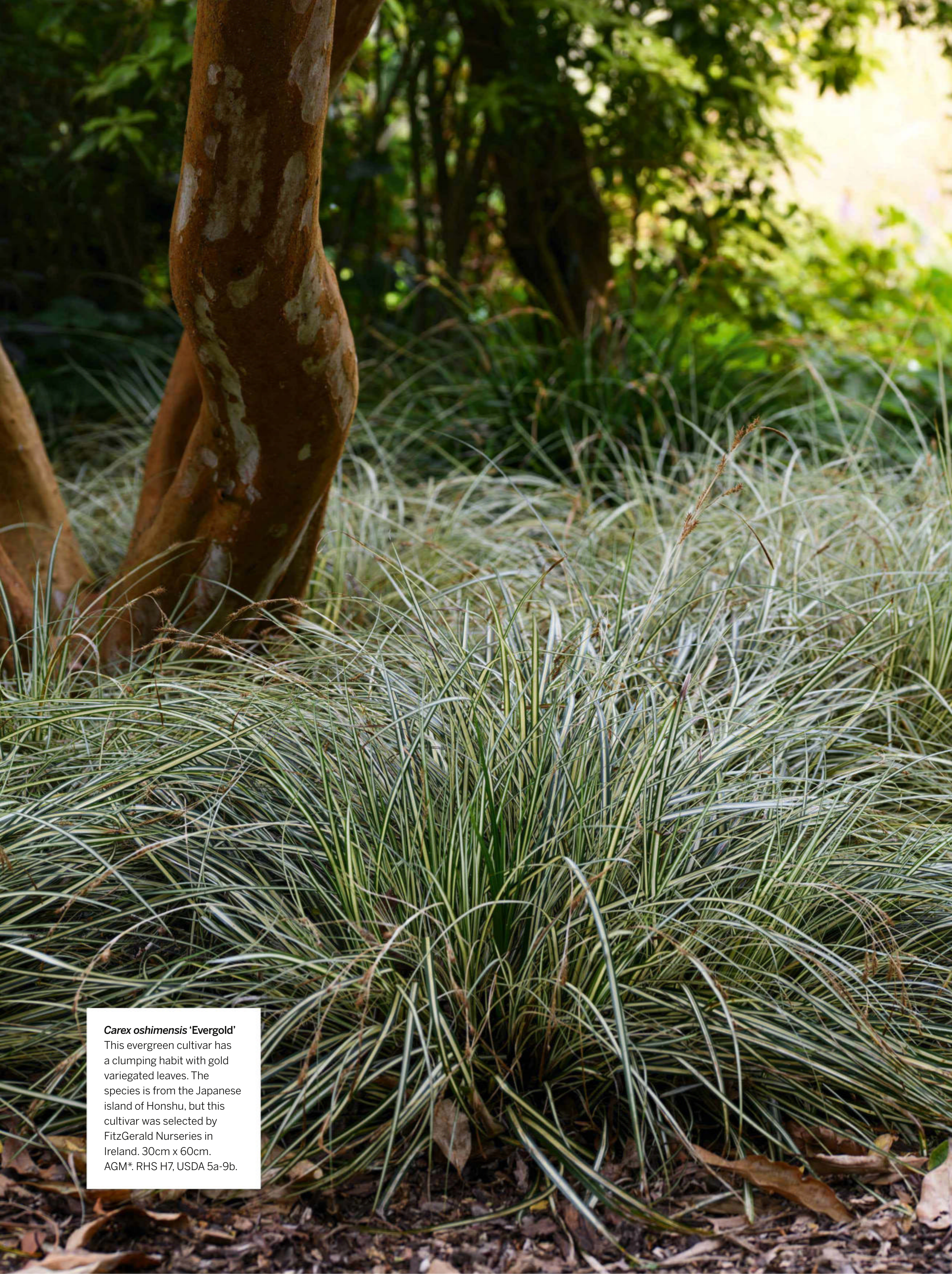
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

Carex pendula
A relatively large, evergreen species with pendulous seedheads and coarse foliage. Native to the UK, this robust species grows in woodland to woodland-edge habitats with various soil conditions. It self-seeds vigorously and is best used in rural settings. Height and spread: 1-1.5m x 1.2m. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b†.

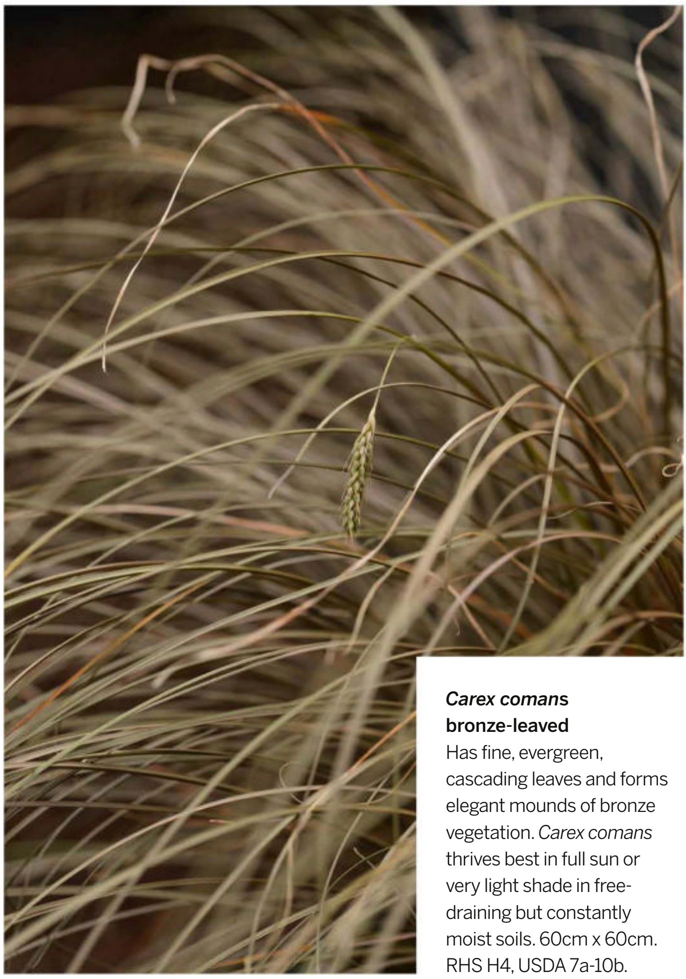
CAREX

Subtle grass-like sedges are perfect for adding texture and beauty in challenging and shady spots in the garden

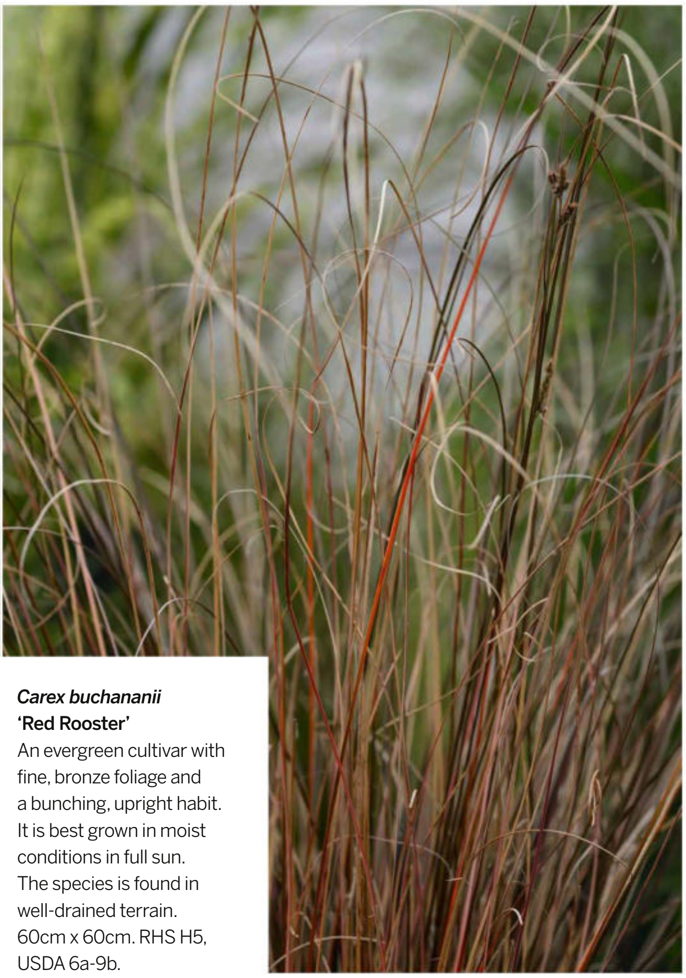
WORDS **GIACOMO GUZZON** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**



Carex oshimensis **'Evergold'**
This evergreen cultivar has a clumping habit with gold variegated leaves. The species is from the Japanese island of Honshu, but this cultivar was selected by FitzGerald Nurseries in Ireland. 30cm x 60cm. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.



***Carex comans* bronze-leaved**
Has fine, evergreen, cascading leaves and forms elegant mounds of bronze vegetation. *Carex comans* thrives best in full sun or very light shade in free-draining but constantly moist soils. 60cm x 60cm. RHS H4, USDA 7a-10b.



***Carex buchananii* 'Red Rooster'**
An evergreen cultivar with fine, bronze foliage and a bunching, upright habit. It is best grown in moist conditions in full sun. The species is found in well-drained terrain. 60cm x 60cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

As a landscape architect who works mainly in public and communal spaces, I'm always on the lookout for robust and resilient plants that have a wild character, are visually pleasing, can withstand shade and drought, and thrive in complex, urban environments with minimum care. *Carex*, as I discovered many years ago, fits this bill. These versatile, grass-like perennials offer a wide range of habits and leaf shapes, and are suitable for an equally diverse range of growing conditions, from dry to wet, and from part to full shade.

The genus *Carex* includes more than 2,000 species, belonging to the Cyperaceae family. These species are widespread throughout temperate ecosystems and are found in many habitats, such as moist and dry forests, prairies, ditches, coastal dunes and wetlands. Commonly known as sedges, they are distinguished from grasses, which belong to the Poaceae family, and rushes, which belong to the Juncaceae family, by their triangular and solid stems. There are other minor differences, but the rhyme 'sedges have edges, rushes are round, grasses have nodes all the way to the ground' is a useful way to remember the key distinguishing features. Their flowers are generally small, green or brown, and emerge above the foliage in spring, but often go unnoticed by most of us.

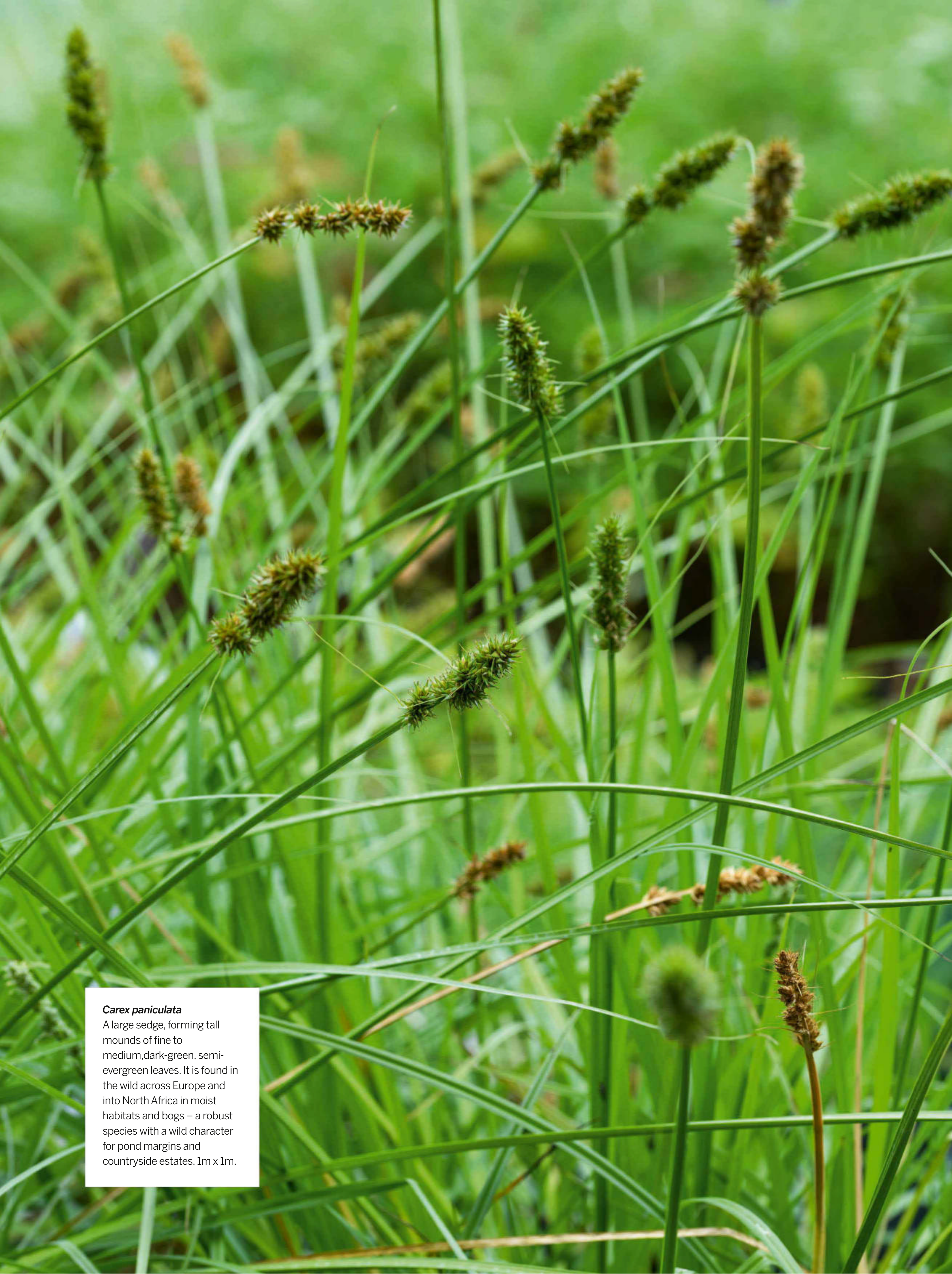
Many *Carex* species form neat clumps of fine to broad leaves. They can suppress weeds and are often well-behaved, meaning they rarely overwhelm their neighbours, and can easily intermingle with perennials and ferns. Some sedges are also the perfect groundcover plants for dry and shady slopes or around shrubs and trees.

> I find *Carex* particularly striking when planted in large groups, combined with taller perennials

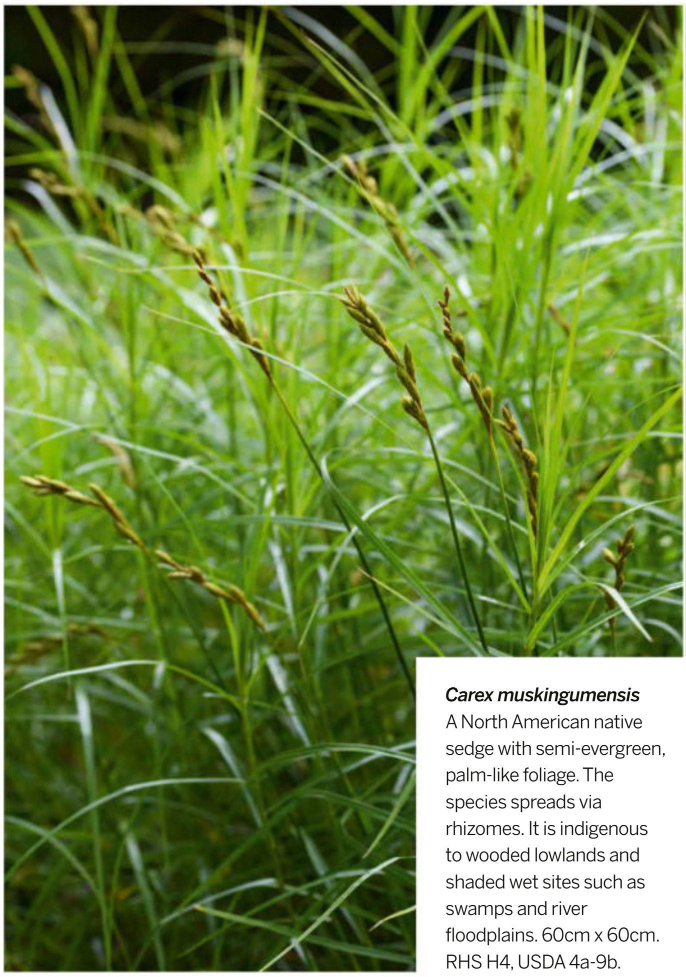
I've seen them extensively planted in public and private landscapes, rain gardens and prairies in the USA, but their use on a large scale is still uncommon in Europe. The Mt Cuba Center botanical garden in Delaware recently issued the final report on its extensive three-year trial to evaluate the horticultural qualities of 65 native *Carex* species, highlighting some promising top performers, including *Carex woodii*, *Carex cherokeensis*, *Carex bromoides* and *Carex jamesii* among others. The German perennial plant inspection group is also currently trialling 48 native and non-native evergreen *Carex* species across Germany and Austria, with the results due out later this year.

I find *Carex* particularly striking when planted in large groups in dappled shade, below deciduous trees, and combined with taller perennials grown in smaller groups so they emerge from a uniformly fine-textured green carpet. In shady environments with average moisture, *Carex* can be paired with *Disporum longistylum* 'Night Heron', *Polystichum setiferum*, *Dryopteris wallichiana*, *Kirengeshoma palmata, Polygonatum* x *hybridum* 'Weihenstephan' or *Aruncus dioicus*, to mention just

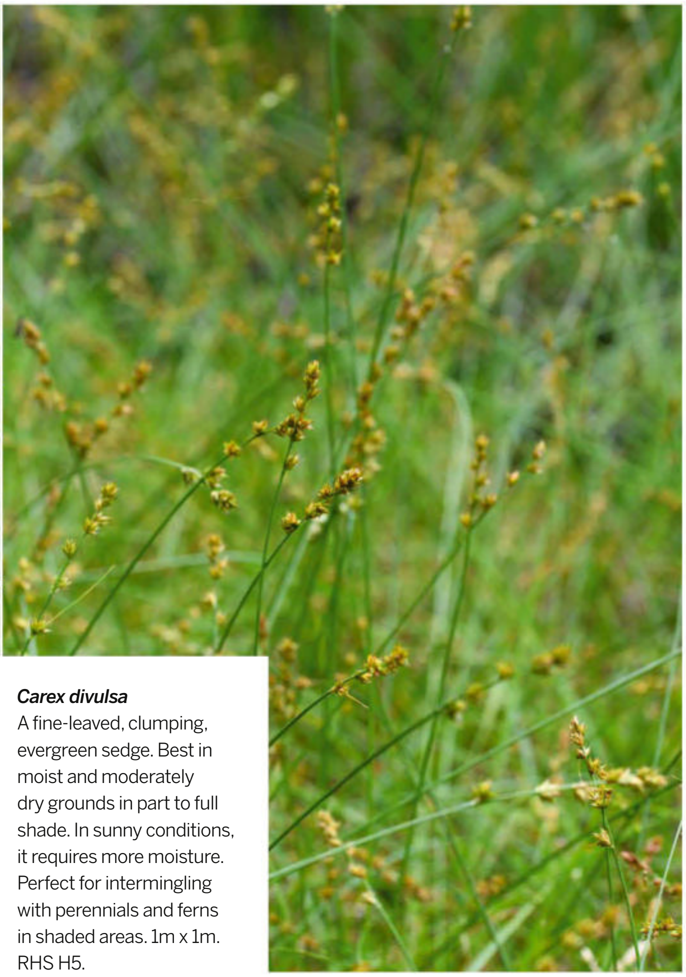
To continue turn to page 51 ▷



Carex paniculata
A large sedge, forming tall mounds of fine to medium,dark-green, semi-evergreen leaves. It is found in the wild across Europe and into North Africa in moist habitats and bogs – a robust species with a wild character for pond margins and countryside estates. 1m x 1m.



Carex muskingumensis
A North American native sedge with semi-evergreen, palm-like foliage. The species spreads via rhizomes. It is indigenous to wooded lowlands and shaded wet sites such as swamps and river floodplains. 60cm x 60cm. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.



Carex divulsa
A fine-leaved, clumping, evergreen sedge. Best in moist and moderately dry grounds in part to full shade. In sunny conditions, it requires more moisture. Perfect for intermingling with perennials and ferns in shaded areas. 1m x 1m. RHS H5.

How to grow *Carex*

• ***Carex* are best grown in moist and water-retentive soil in part-shade locations.** There is considerable variation among the species, but they generally tend to perform best in friable, sandy, loamy and not-too-dry soils. Unless the soil is particularly poor, there is no need for additional feeding.

• **It is imperative you plant them in the right habitat**, matching the environmental conditions where these species originate. Lowland species require constant moisture, while upland species need good drainage; otherwise, they will fail.

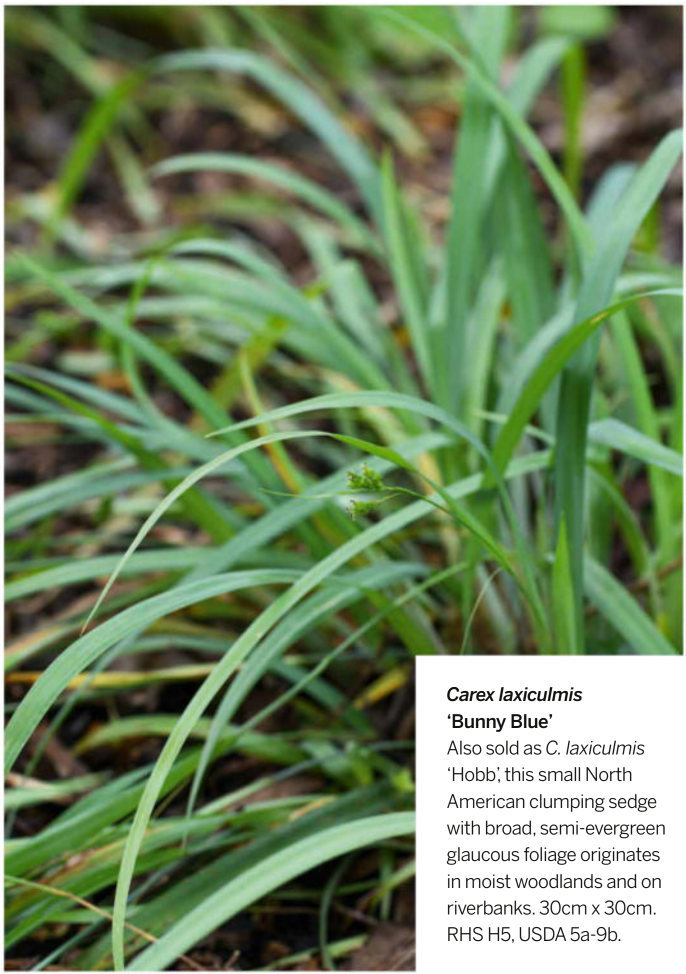
• **Cool-season grasses and grass-like plants, such as *Carex*, are best planted in spring or autumn** when the temperatures are lower and they are actively growing. Growth slows down in the heat of the summer, so it is best to avoid this period. In colder climates, sedges are best planted in spring so they have enough time to get established before winter.

• **Mulching after planting with well-rotted leafmould or compost** can improve the soil structure, suppress spontaneous vegetation and increase the soil's water-retention capacity, aiding plant establishment. You can apply a 3-5cm layer of such loose organic material annually in spring around the plants.

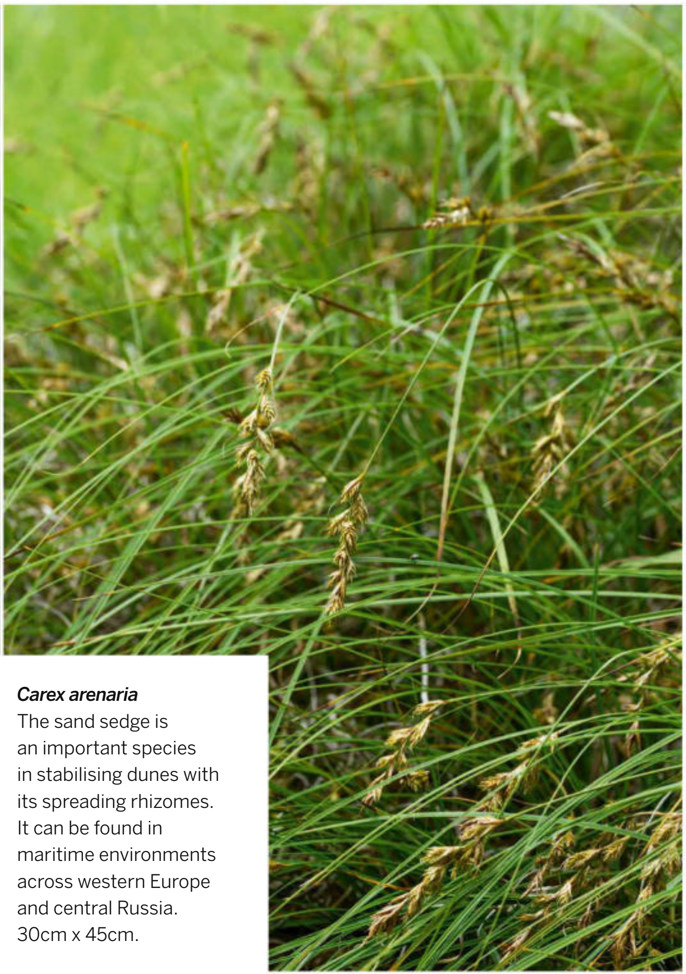
• ***Carex* are low-maintenance, undemanding plants.** Evergreen species can be brushed with a rake in spring to remove dead leaves. Evergreen species with fine leaves, such as *Carex remota* or *C. divulsa*, benefit from a yearly cut in spring to keep the crown neat and full. However, this cut should never be done at soil level, but at least 15cm high to avoid the risk of killing them. All deciduous or semi-deciduous species, such as *C. grayi* with its showy starburst-like seedheads, or North American species *C. laxiculmis, C. muskingumensis* and *C. stricta*, can be cut to ground level in the spring before they start growing.

• **To propagate, *Carex*, like other cool-season grasses and grass-like plants, are best divided in early spring** as they come into growth. *Carex*, especially the clump-forming species, rarely require dividing.

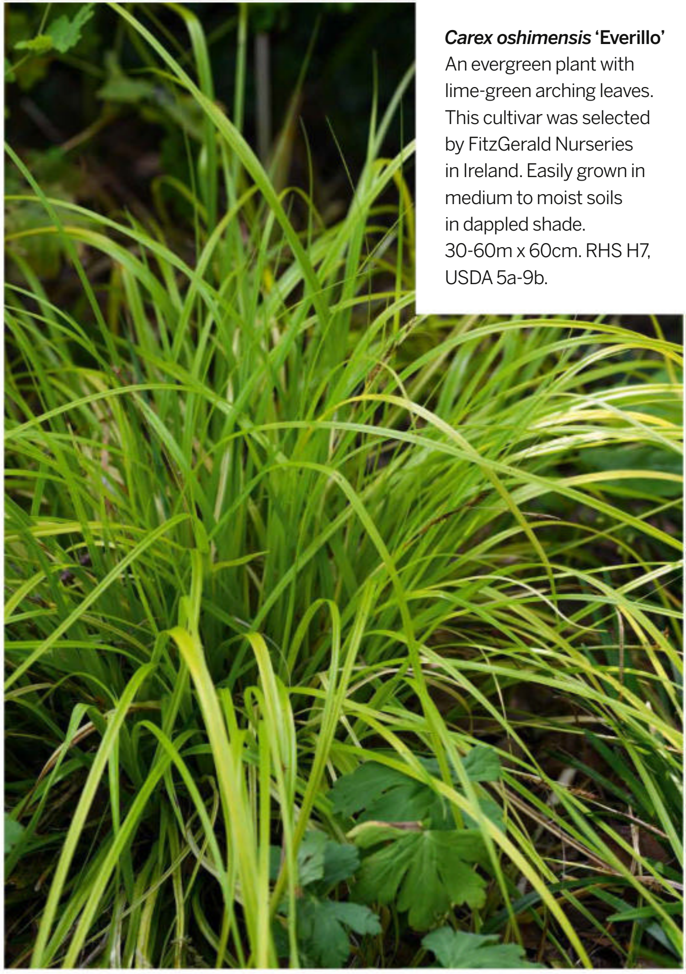
• **Alternatively, seeds germinate after a couple of months of moist stratification.** They can be sown outside in autumn, allowing the cold weather to vernalise them naturally. The tiny seeds can also be sown in spring after being kept in moist, sand-vermiculite in the fridge over winter. The seeds need to be sown superficially, no deeper than the seed's width.



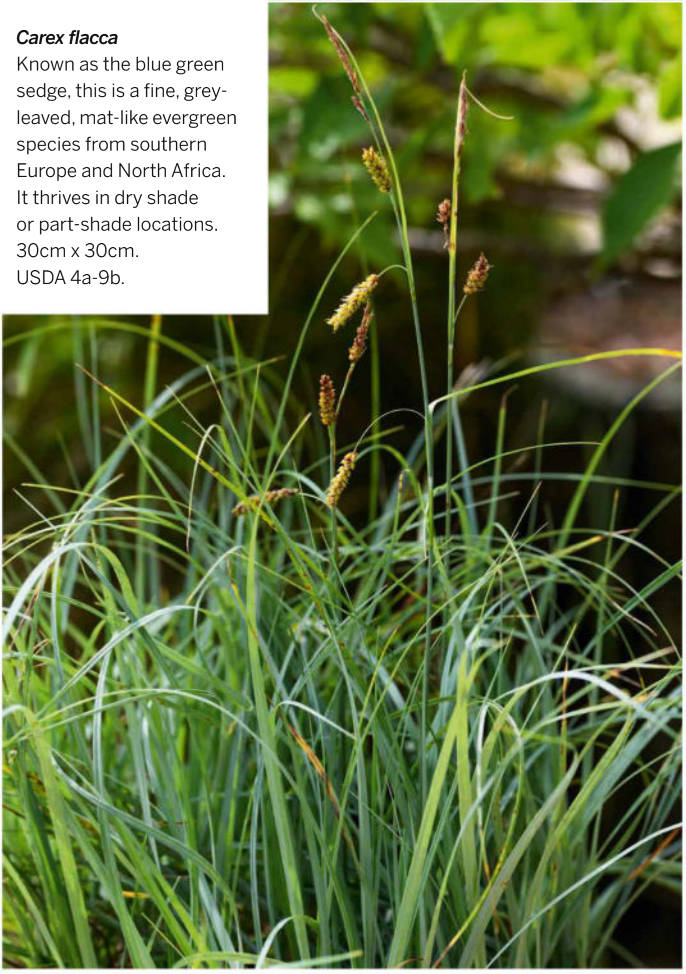
Carex laxiculmis 'Bunny Blue'
Also sold as *C. laxiculmis* 'Hobb', this small North American clumping sedge with broad, semi-evergreen glaucous foliage originates in moist woodlands and on riverbanks. 30cm x 30cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.



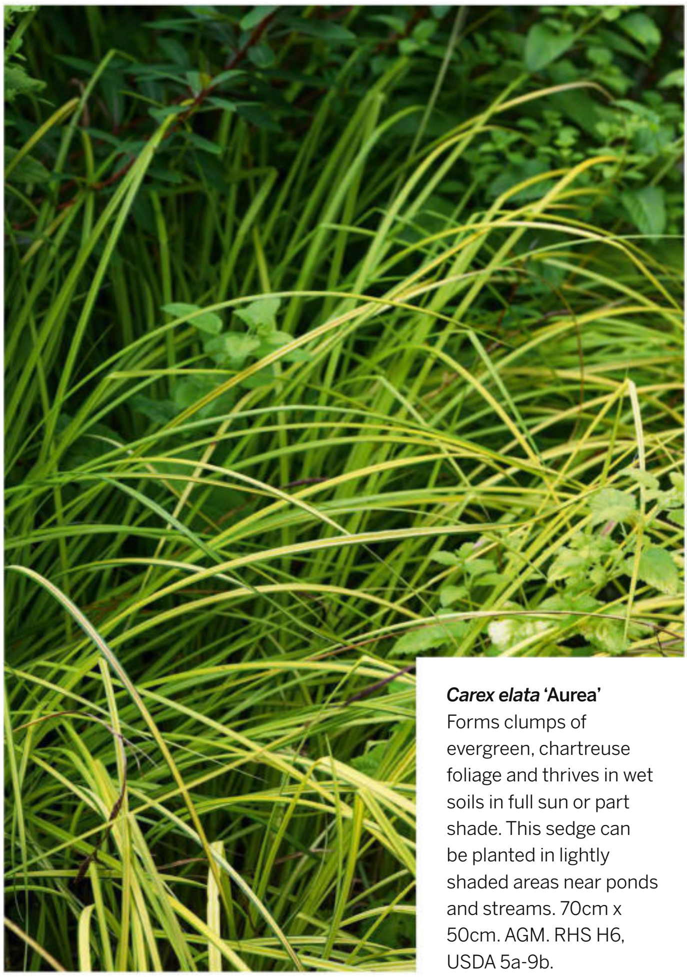
Carex arenaria
The sand sedge is an important species in stabilising dunes with its spreading rhizomes. It can be found in maritime environments across western Europe and central Russia. 30cm x 45cm.



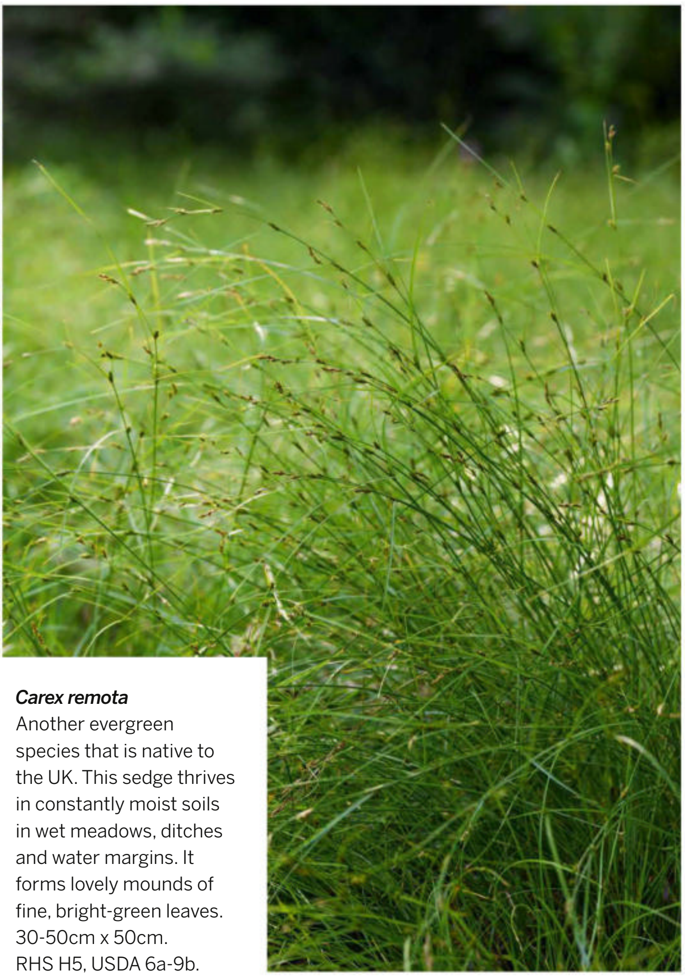
Carex oshimensis 'Everillo'
An evergreen plant with lime-green arching leaves. This cultivar was selected by FitzGerald Nurseries in Ireland. Easily grown in medium to moist soils in dappled shade. 30-60m x 60cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-9b.



Carex flacca
Known as the blue green sedge, this is a fine, grey-leaved, mat-like evergreen species from southern Europe and North Africa. It thrives in dry shade or part-shade locations. 30cm x 30cm. USDA 4a-9b.



***Carex elata* 'Aurea'**
Forms clumps of evergreen, chartreuse foliage and thrives in wet soils in full sun or part shade. This sedge can be planted in lightly shaded areas near ponds and streams. 70cm x 50cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.



Carex remota
Another evergreen species that is native to the UK. This sedge thrives in constantly moist soils in wet meadows, ditches and water margins. It forms lovely mounds of fine, bright-green leaves. 30-50cm x 50cm.
RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

MANY THANKS TO NEIL LUCAS AND KNOLL GARDENS IN DORSET WHERE THESE IMAGES WERE TAKEN.

▷ a few. It is also useful as a simple, undemanding green filler at the base of trees and shrubs.

In Europe, two Asiatic species dominate the market: *Carex oshimensis,* and its multitude of variegated cultivars, and *Carex morowii.* I prefer the simple green cultivars because they look wilder and less contrived. Both species are hardy and undemanding and cope with various soil and light conditions. In the UK, two valuable native, fine-leaved, clumping species are *Carex remota* and *Carex divulsa*. They both look very similar and are often mismatched, in my experience. The problem is that *Carex remota* requires moist soils, while *Carex divulsa* is far more adaptable; so, they're not interchangeable.

Carex pendula is a large, evergreen, broad-leaved UK native species that self-seeds heavily and is best suited for natural areas in the countryside near watercourses or bogs. *Carex flacca* is a good option for dry shade, with its elegant, tufted habit and grey-blue foliage. *Carex muskingumensis*, a North American native species, thrives in various degrees of shade and moisture, has attractive palm-like foliage and spreads via rhizomes. Hence, it is a robust species that can cover large areas and cope with the fluctuating moisture in rain gardens and water-retention basins.

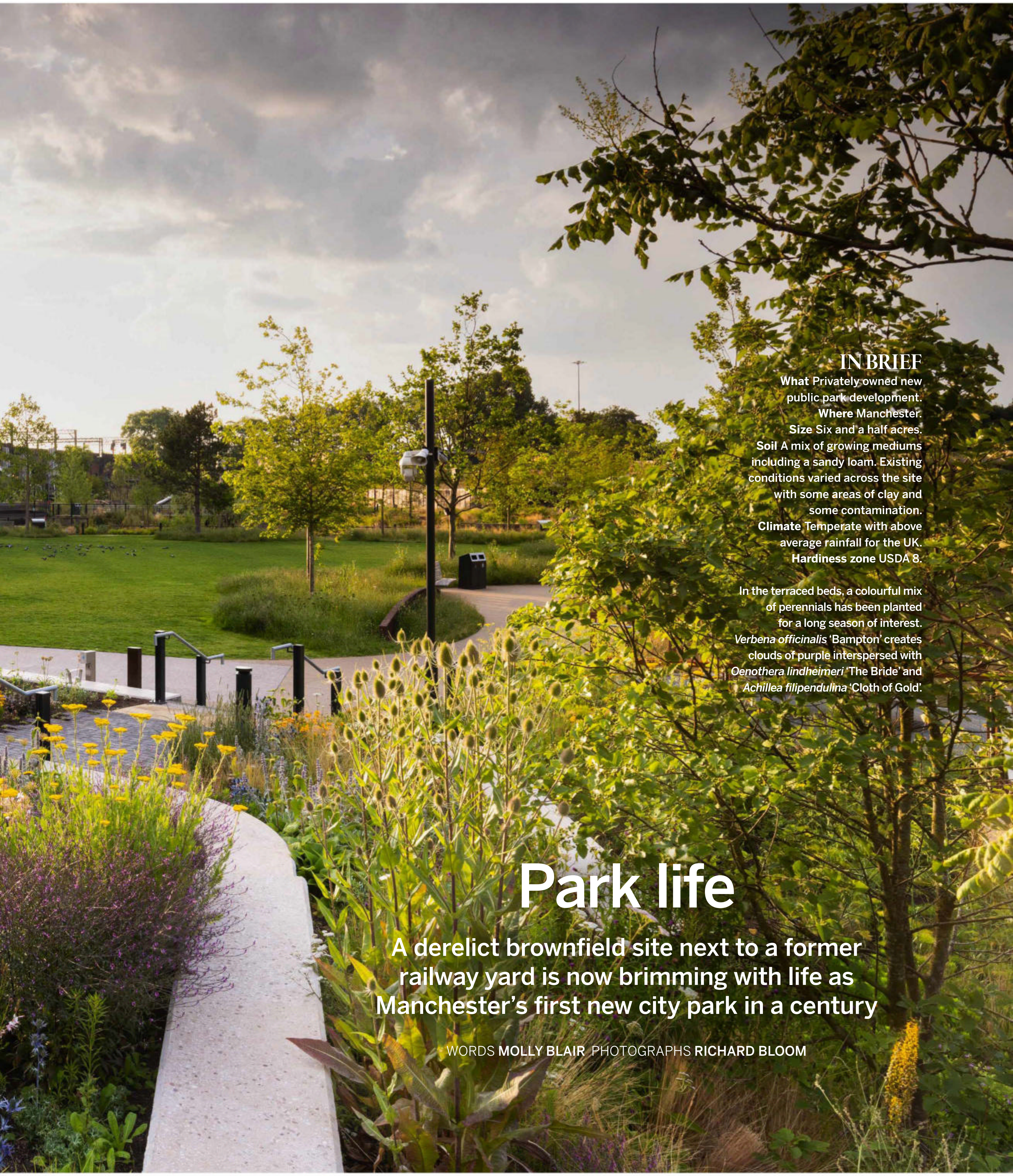
There really are *Carex* for every situation, and these species, although not remarkably showy, are invaluable for creating low-maintenance and resilient landscapes and gardens under challenging conditions. Many North American species have yet to be introduced to cultivation in Europe. They will offer gardeners many new forms, uses and ideas for various sites. The fine-leaved, low-spreading species, for example, can be regularly mowed and used as lawn alternatives in shady conditions, which is not the typical way of using and thinking of *Carex*. □

> There are *Carex* for every situation. They're invaluable for creating low-maintenance, resilient gardens

Giacomo Guzzon is a landscape architect and head of planting design at Gillespies in London. He also lectures in plant-science.

Where to see and buy
- **Beth Chatto Plants & Gardens** Elmstead Market, Colchester, Essex CO7 7DB. Tel 01206 822007, bethchatto.co.uk
- **Bluebell Arboretum & Nursery** Annwell Lane, Smisby, Ashby de la Zouch, Derbyshire LE65 2TA. Tel 01530 413700, bluebellnursery.com
- **Burncoose Nurseries** Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ. Tel 01209 860316, burncoose.co.uk
- **Kelways Plants** Picts Hill, Langport, Somerset TA10 9EZ. Tel 01458 250521, kelways.co.uk
- **Knoll Gardens** Knoll House, Stapehill Road, Wimborne Minster, Dorset BH21 7ND. Tel 01202 873931, knollgardens.co.uk

T MAYFI



IN BRIEF

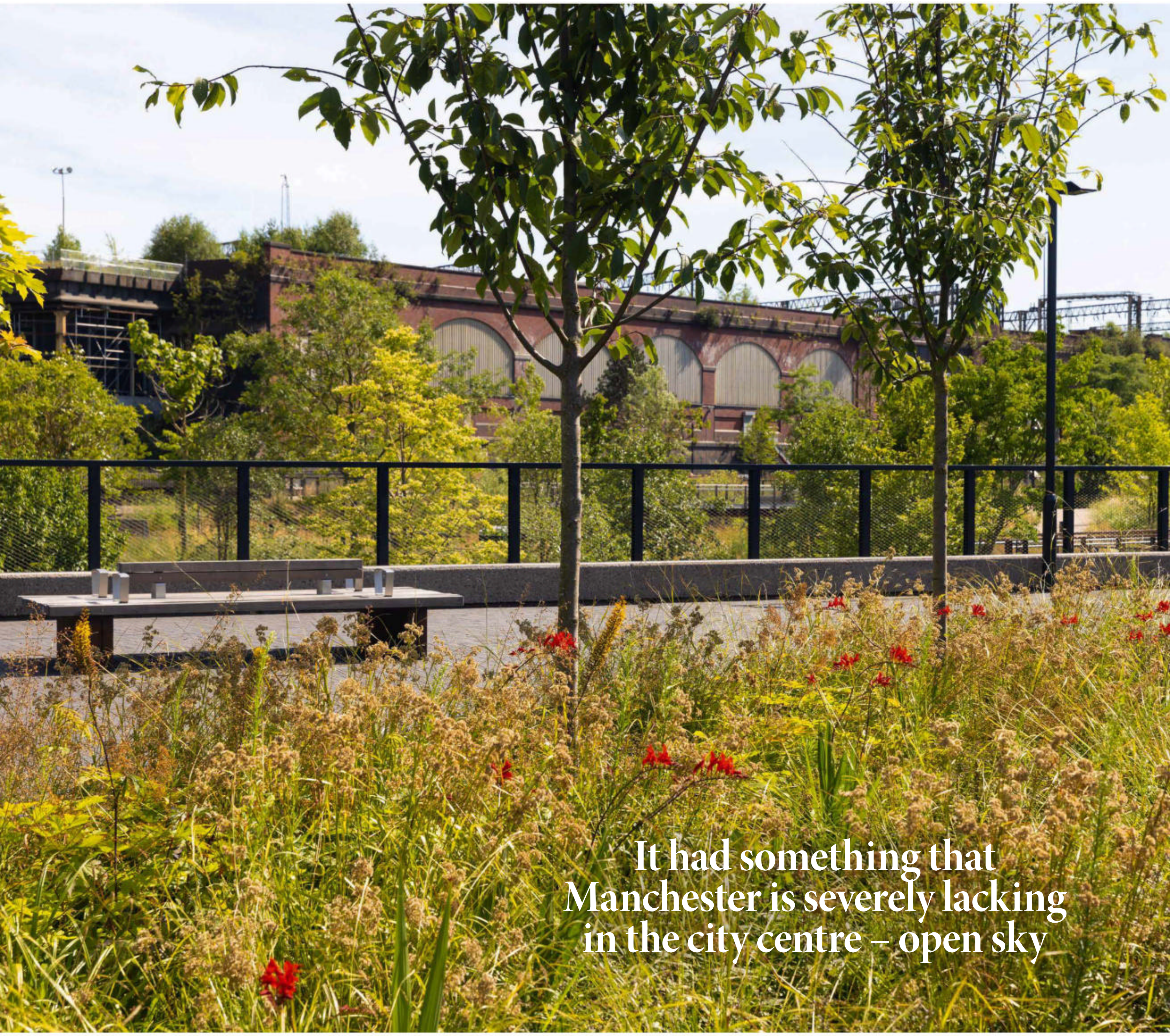
What Privately owned new public park development.
Where Manchester.
Size Six and a half acres.
Soil A mix of growing mediums including a sandy loam. Existing conditions varied across the site with some areas of clay and some contamination.
Climate Temperate with above average rainfall for the UK.
Hardiness zone USDA 8.

In the terraced beds, a colourful mix of perennials has been planted for a long season of interest. *Verbena officinalis* 'Bampton' creates clouds of purple interspersed with *Oenothera lindheimeri* 'The Bride' and *Achillea filipendulina* 'Cloth of Gold'.

Park life

A derelict brownfield site next to a former railway yard is now brimming with life as Manchester's first new city park in a century

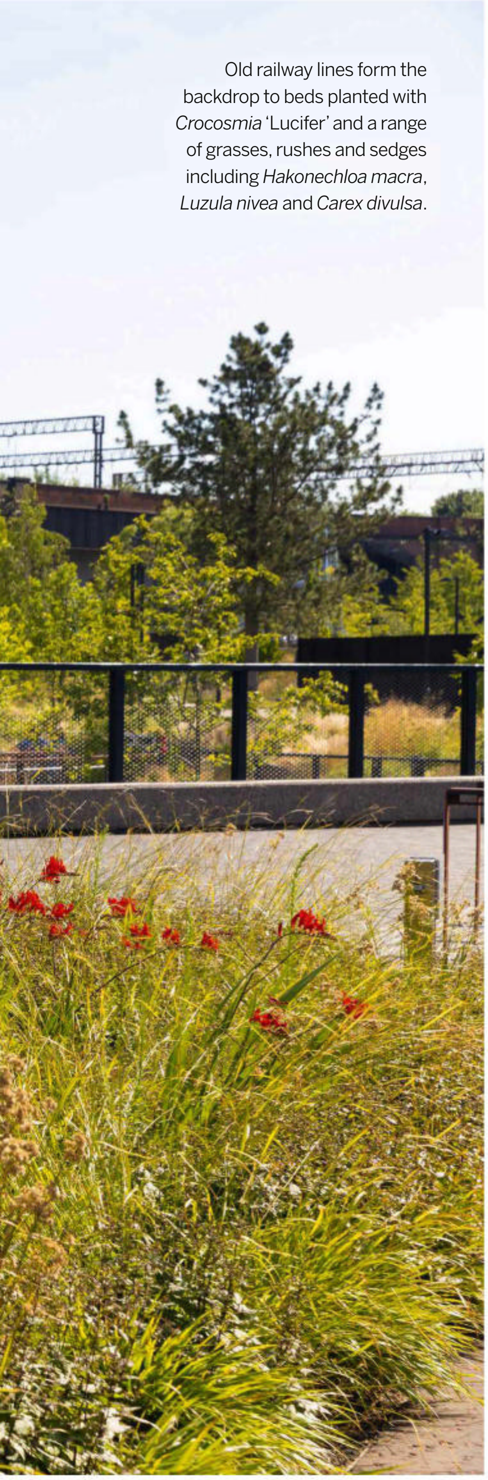
WORDS **MOLLY BLAIR** PHOTOGRAPHS **RICHARD BLOOM**



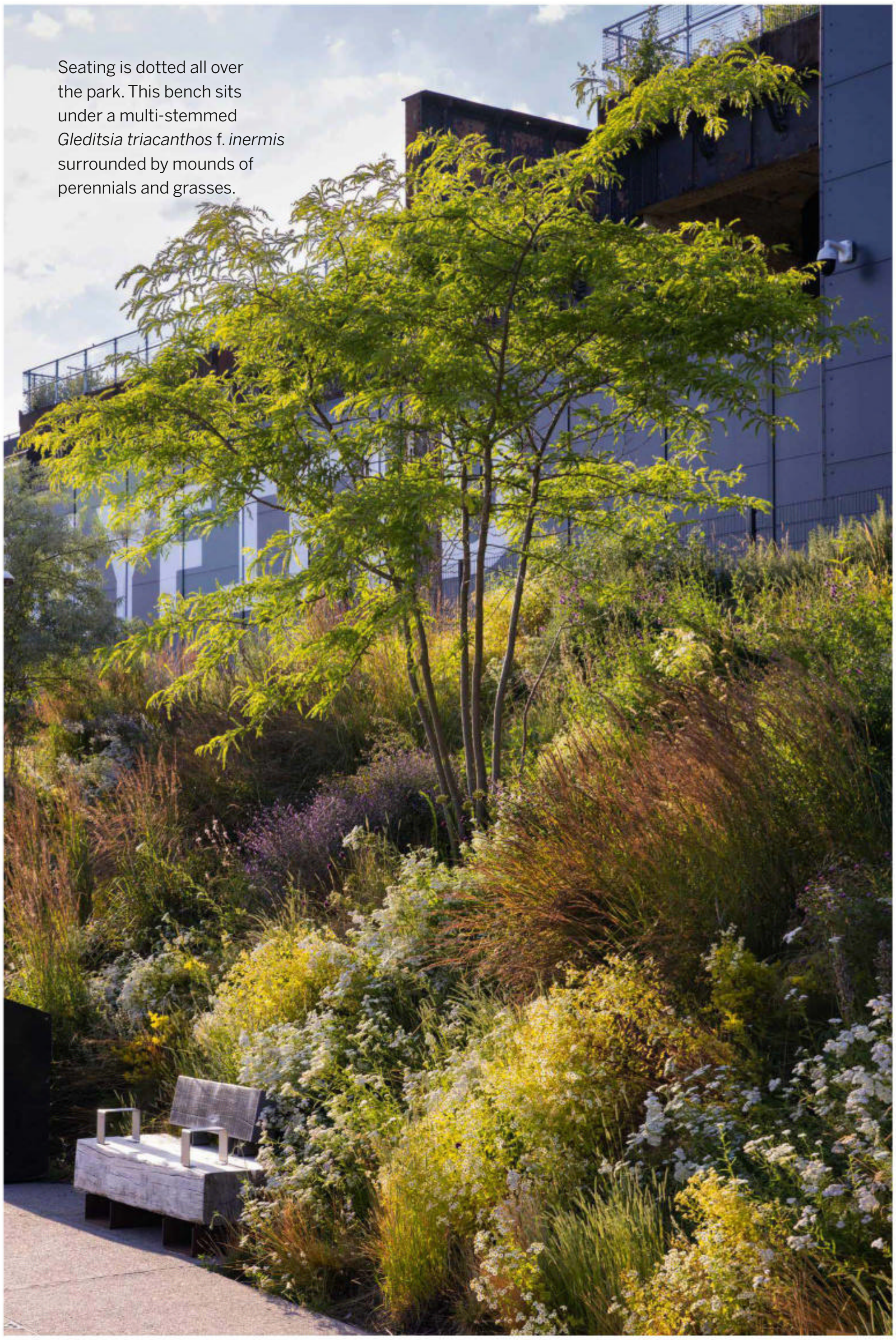
It had something that Manchester is severely lacking in the city centre – open sky

Manchester is proud of its industrial heritage, but the city looks towards the future as well as honouring its history. It has a target of reaching carbon zero by 2038, 12 years earlier than the national target, and in 2019 the city declared a climate emergency. So when plans were made to develop Mayfield, an abandoned industrial hub where dye works and breweries once flourished, it was clear that it needed to reflect this dual character that is uniquely Mancunian. Over the next few years, this district near Manchester Piccadilly Station is set to be rejuvenated as part of the Mayfield Partnership, a public-private collaboration between several organisations including Manchester City Council and regeneration specialists LandsecU+I. What makes this development stand out, and something that could create a blueprint for developments further afield, is the fact that the landscape was prioritised and built first. The six-and-a-half-acre Mayfield Park opened its gates in September 2022 as the city's first newly built city-centre park in a century.

Duncan Paybody from Studio Egret West, who led the landscape team that designed the park, says that when they first visited the site, they found an old station on top of a depot building. "The track beds were flourishing with buddleja and all these self-seeded species. There was a really strong sense of the past with these rusty beams and old railway tracks, but nature was finding its way and starting to take over the site," he says. "In our eyes, it was already really beautiful, and it had something that Manchester is severely lacking in the city centre – open sky and nature. We saw the potential."



Old railway lines form the backdrop to beds planted with *Crocosmia* 'Lucifer' and a range of grasses, rushes and sedges including *Hakonechloa macra*, *Luzula nivea* and *Carex divulsa*.



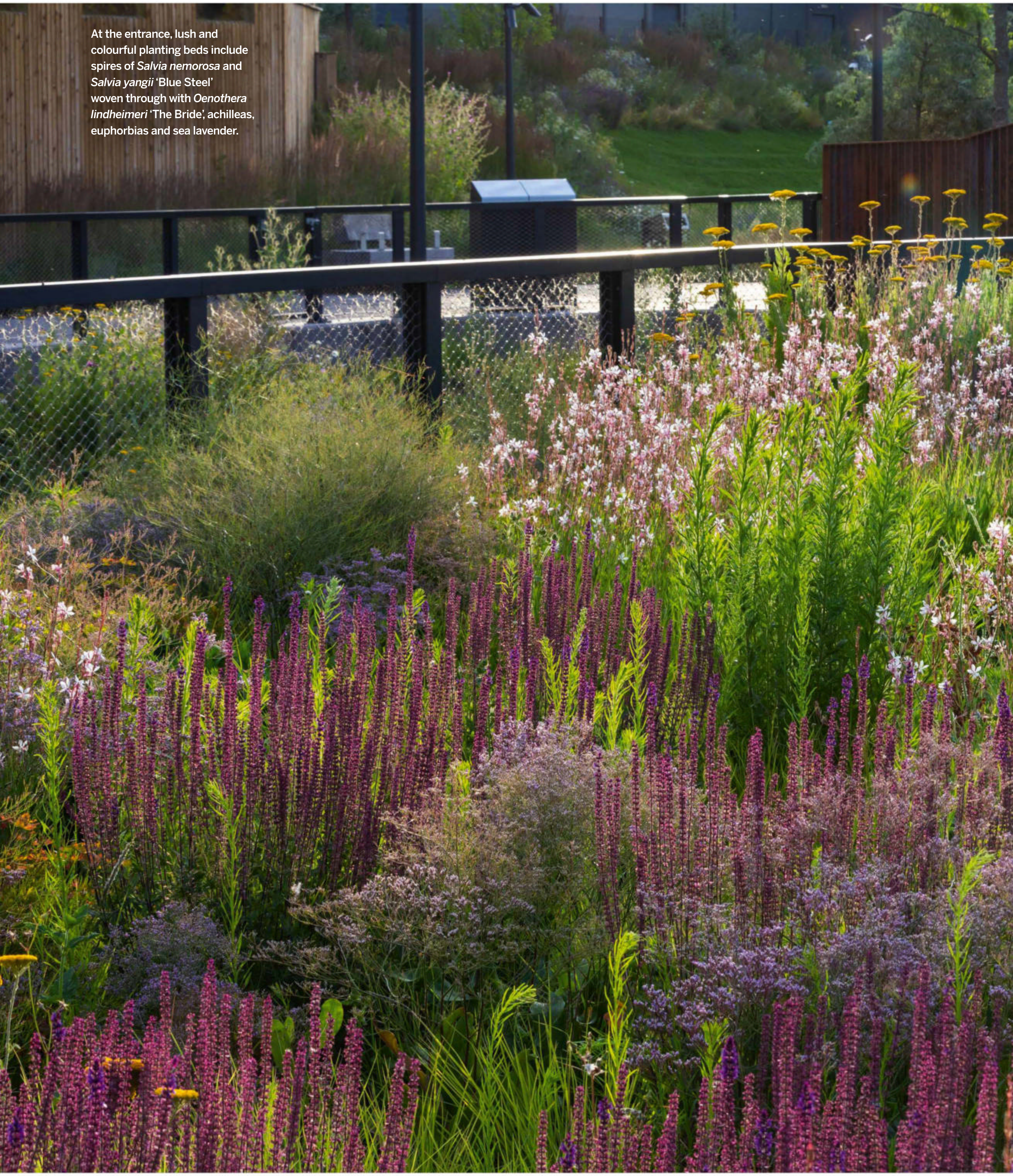
Seating is dotted all over the park. This bench sits under a multi-stemmed *Gleditsia triacanthos* f. *inermis* surrounded by mounds of perennials and grasses.

The River Medlock is the focal point that ties the park together. Previously, it was largely covered by concrete culverts; stagnant and filled with everything from car batteries to toilet seats. Now, it's more in keeping with its name, which means 'meadow stream.' In heavy rainfall, the river floods into the lower levels of the park, where bridges and jetties allow visitors to observe the new habitats that are now home to ducks, geese, herons and brown trout."Below a certain level in the park, the planting is more for wildlife than it is for people," says Duncan. "It's about creating habitat, and anything within the river corridor is also designed to deal with fluctuations."

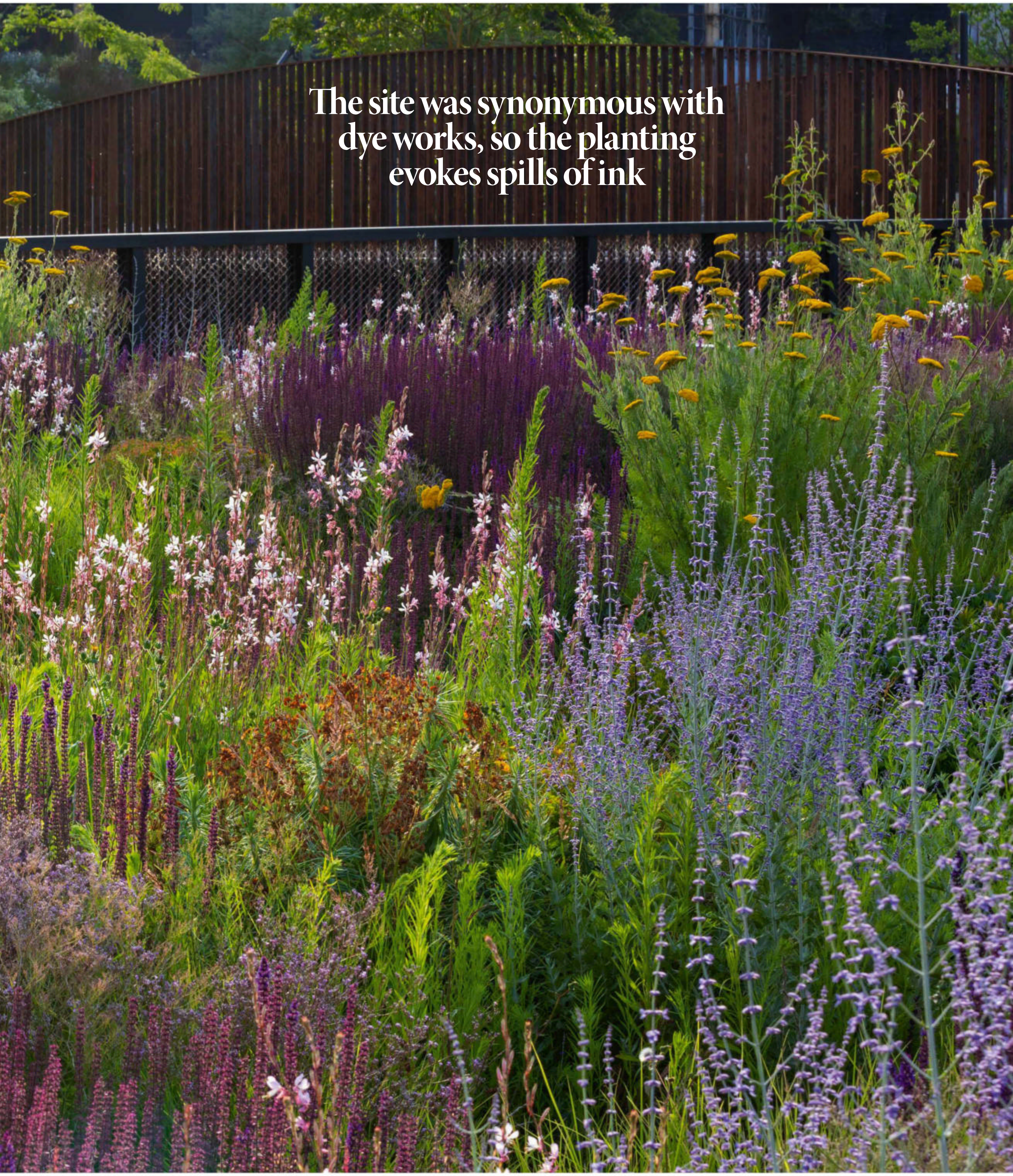
The team worked closely with the Environment Agency on this area to create a resilient base that is made up of native plants and wildflower turf. On the upper levels, planting beds are more curated and created with human visitors in mind. Early in the season, the flowers of *Cornus mas* and the stems of willow bring pops of yellow to the space, alongside euphorbias and primroses. These give way to purple tones that carry through the summer season and into autumn. "At the entrances, we focused on having really strong splashes of colour," explains Duncan. "In May, the salvias come through. The site was synonymous with dye works, so the planting here evokes spills of ink. We bookend the season with asters, partly because they are great for extending seasonal colour, but also because they were already self-seeding around the site."

The south-facing bank that backs on to the Depot Mayfield building, which this month plays host to the inaugural RHS Urban Show, is planted to emulate railway embankments. "Here we've got a Mediterranean mix of things," says Duncan. "*Verbena officinalis* ▷

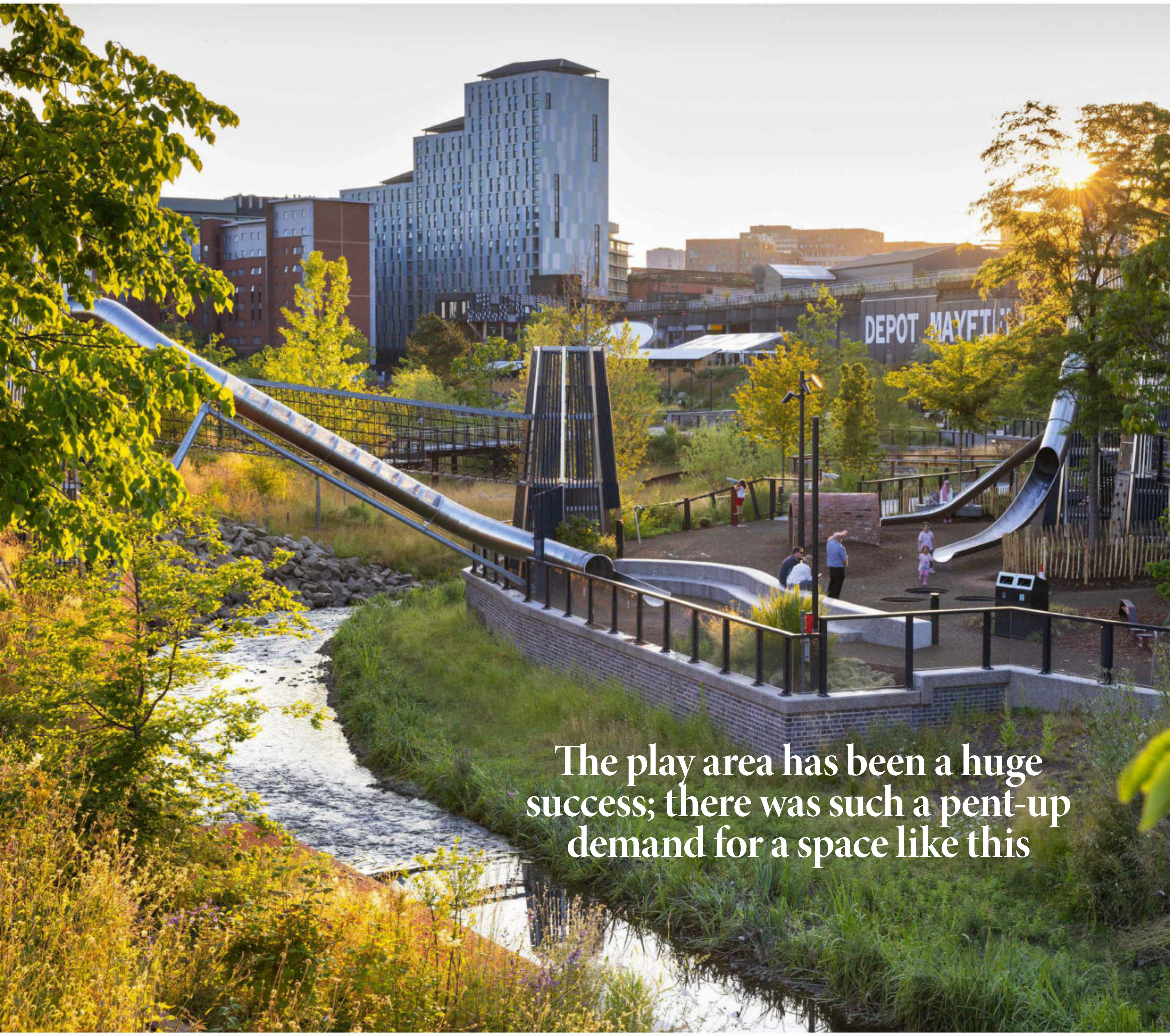
To continue turn to page 59



At the entrance, lush and colourful planting beds include spires of *Salvia nemorosa* and *Salvia yangii* 'Blue Steel' woven through with *Oenothera lindheimeri* 'The Bride', achilleas, euphorbias and sea lavender.



The site was synonymous with dye works, so the planting evokes spills of ink



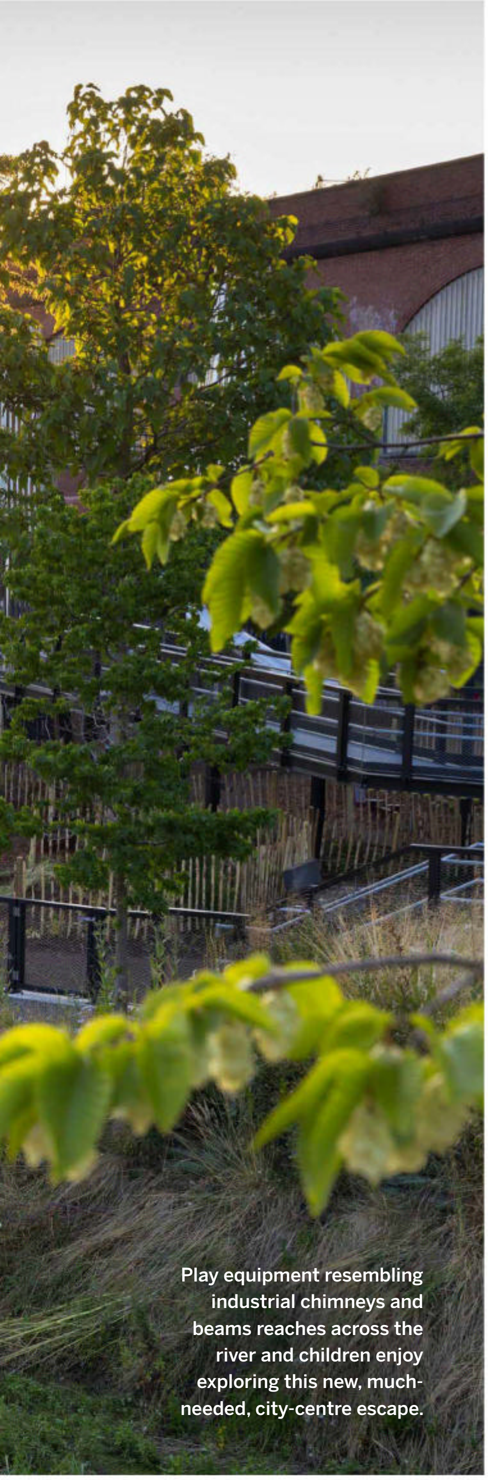
The play area has been a huge success; there was such a pent-up demand for a space like this

Designing for kids

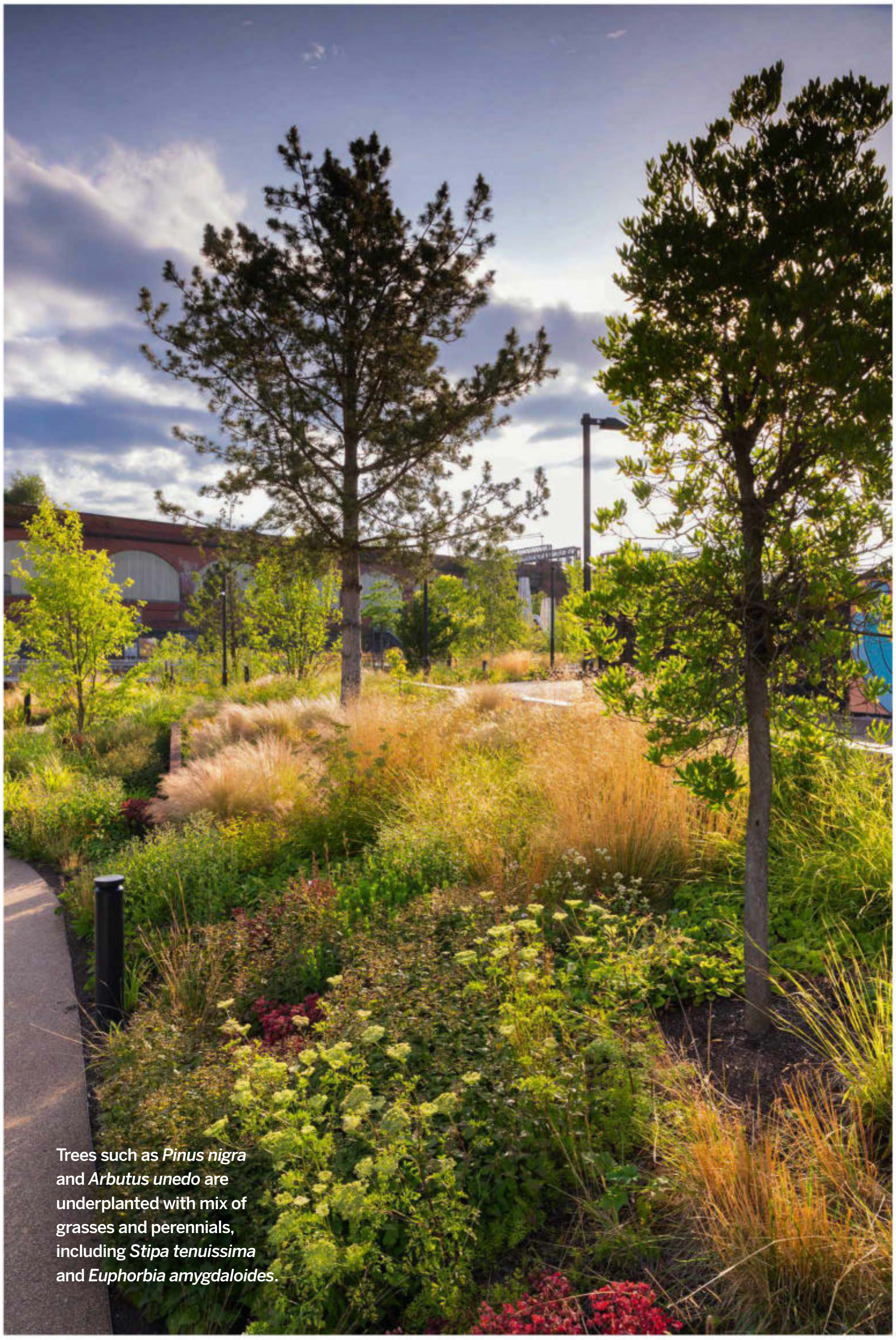
At the far end of the park, the team created a sizeable play area. "We found that in a lot of playgrounds, you get this sort of dumbed-down approach in terms of planting, and it's just a bright-coloured surface, devoid of trees and planting, with lots of play equipment," says Duncan. "We didn't want to do that. We introduced quite a lot of planting into the play area. If you walk around the park and you haven't got kids, it's still interesting to look at."

There have been lessons learned from the experience, however. "A lot of the lower-level planting has failed because the kids are basically trashing it. We were a little naïve in terms of thinking that if we create a lot of routes, kids will stick to those routes. When I went with my own kids, even I found myself standing on top of a planting bed." Duncan is still pleased that they incorporated lots of planting into the play area. "We want it to still feel very much like a part of the park."

Keeping things local was also important, so the striking metal equipment, which echoes industrial chimneys and beams, was built by Stockport-based Massey & Harris, including a slide that crosses the river. Brick tunnels link the space to the surrounding railway arches, and trees planted within the playground will grow to form a large canopy, further linking the area to the surrounding park. "The play area has been a huge success," says Duncan. "There was such a pent-up demand for a space like this."



Play equipment resembling industrial chimneys and beams reaches across the river and children enjoy exploring this new, much-needed, city-centre escape.



Trees such as *Pinus nigra* and *Arbutus unedo* are underplanted with mix of grasses and perennials, including *Stipa tenuissima* and *Euphorbia amygdaloides*.

▷ 'Bampton' has been a star of the show, creating a dome-like cloud of purple." *Calamagrostis* x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' provides structure, alongside *Daucus carota*, *Galium verum* and *Linaria vulgaris*.

Throughout the park, the team planted a wide range of trees including *Arbutus unedo, Amelanchier* x *grandiflora* 'Robin Hill' and *Gleditsia triacanthos,* alongside more traditional city park trees such as *Quercus robur* and *Platanus* x *hispanica*. "We didn't want any trees in lines; we wanted them in random groups," says Duncan. "We purposely picked a variety of species and forms. Typically, in city centres you find trees planted in grids resembling lollipops. We've done the opposite of that to create a totally different space."

To root the development to its past, the team wanted to reuse as much material as they could from what they found on site. The retaining walls along the sides of the river were kept, with their patchwork of brick and stone harking back to all the factories that have come and gone here since the 18th century. Cast-iron hog-back beams are repurposed as bridges and sculptural elements in borders; an old fire escape from a derelict factory creates a walkway across one bed.

Everything about the design of Mayfield Park serves to help it harmonise with the people and animals that will use it, while maintaining its Mancunian sense of place. It is a unique development that will continue to evolve, and while the project embraces Manchester's heritage, Duncan says it also plays to the city's future, "which should be far greener, and far more biodiverse". □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Duncan Paybody's work at **studioegretwest.com** and more about the park at **mayfieldmanchester.co.uk**

JOHN WYER

The landscape designer on the art of winning arguments, cycling to China, changing people's preconceptions and refusing to be pigeonholed

WORDS JODIE JONES PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

In an era obsessed with categorisation, John Wyer declines to be pigeonholed. He is an accomplished designer, writer, artist, entrepreneur and philanthropist, a keen cyclist, voracious reader and obsessive home cook.

But, because the company he established 30 years ago also builds gardens, he tends to be labelled as a landscaper. "I think that is true, at least outside the industry," he says, "but it doesn't bother me. I've never really conformed to a type."

Growing up in south London as the middle child of five, this tendency mainly took the form of arguing. "In fact, our whole family was known for it. Dinnertimes could get quite lively. We would argue about everything, from politics to religion, to who was going to borrow the car. I was brought up to question the world."

At school, his endless questions were not always welcomed by teachers trying to herd their pupils towards academic success. "I spent a good ten years not doing what I was told, and as a result failed every exam I took during that period."

Instead of taking notes, he spent lessons sketching plans for landscapes. "Architecture, vistas and revealed views always interested me – the relationship between experienced landscape and geometry. I love geometry… For me it's a way of seeing and structuring the world."

Thanks to an unusually enlightened school careers advisor, he was guided towards a degree in landscape architecture. "I didn't even know it was a career option, but I applied for four different courses and, despite not having the grades, I got offers from all four on the strength of my interviews."

> IF YOU GET IT RIGHT, LANDSCAPE AFFECTS YOU ON AN EMOTIONAL LEVEL, IN THE WAY THAT MUSIC AND FOOD DO

He chose Manchester Metropolitan University, where he continued to argue and continued to fail every exam. "My supervisor said I was the best student in the year and begged me to stop debating and do some actual work." Needless to say, he didn't, but he did spend his year out de facto running the landscape department at Lancaster City Council when the two permanent staff both went on maternity leave, and, following a (failed) post-grad diploma, walked into a job in the prestigious design department at Clifton Nurseries.

This famously upmarket and expensive west London nursery was in some ways an unlikely fit for a politically left-leaning non-conformist, but John loved it. "Within a couple of years I was doing my own designs for some really big names." Freddie Mercury was so delighted with his garden makeover that he gave John a crystal decanter engraved with the words: 'To dearest Johnny, Love Freddie'.

At which point, John decided to cycle to China on a bike he had built for himself. He set off from Westminster Bridge with his wife-to-be Vicky, also a landscape architect. The trip took 11 months and along the way he got arrested for arguing with the Chinese police, but the experience changed him for the better. "I left London as a young man who felt he had failed at everything but, having succeeded with that epic trip, I finally gained a confidence in my ability to see things through."

He returned to Clifton for five more years, eventually heading the design department while his friend Chris Bowles ran the construction department, and the pair gradually hatched a plan to set up in business for themselves. Of course, John wasn't ever going to do this the easy way. "I took the plunge in 1992, when Vicky and I were expecting our first baby and the country was in recession. As a point of honour I never took a single client from Clifton, but work started coming in almost immediately."

John and Chris quickly gained a reputation for designing, constructing and maintaining gardens to the very highest level, and their business grew steadily. "But there came a point where Chris and I had a separation of thinking. Things got quite explosive and the situation was making me really unhappy, so we eventually agreed that Chris would retire while I took the business forward."

John continued to ask awkward questions, mainly of himself. "I was looking to do things better and, as our team grew, I wanted to look after them better as well. Business is fundamentally about people, not profit and loss. We've got a team of around 50 now, and many of them have stayed for decades, so I guess we are doing something right."

The gardens John and his team produce are equally successful, winning shelves full of awards both for their design and their polished execution. Unusually, Bowles & Wyer build for other high-profile designers as well. "It shouldn't work, like a bumblebee shouldn't be able to fly," he says, "but they know we would never poach their clients."

The fact is that while building his own company, John has also earned huge respect within the industry. He lectures, mentors and writes on the subject, and volunteers a huge amount of time to working with various professional associations.

"I love this business. If you get it right, landscape affects you on an emotional level, in the same way that music and food do, and that still excites me. Really, I suppose I want to change how people experience the world." □

USEFUL INFORMATION
Find out more about John Wyer's work at **bowleswyer.co.uk**

IN BRIEF

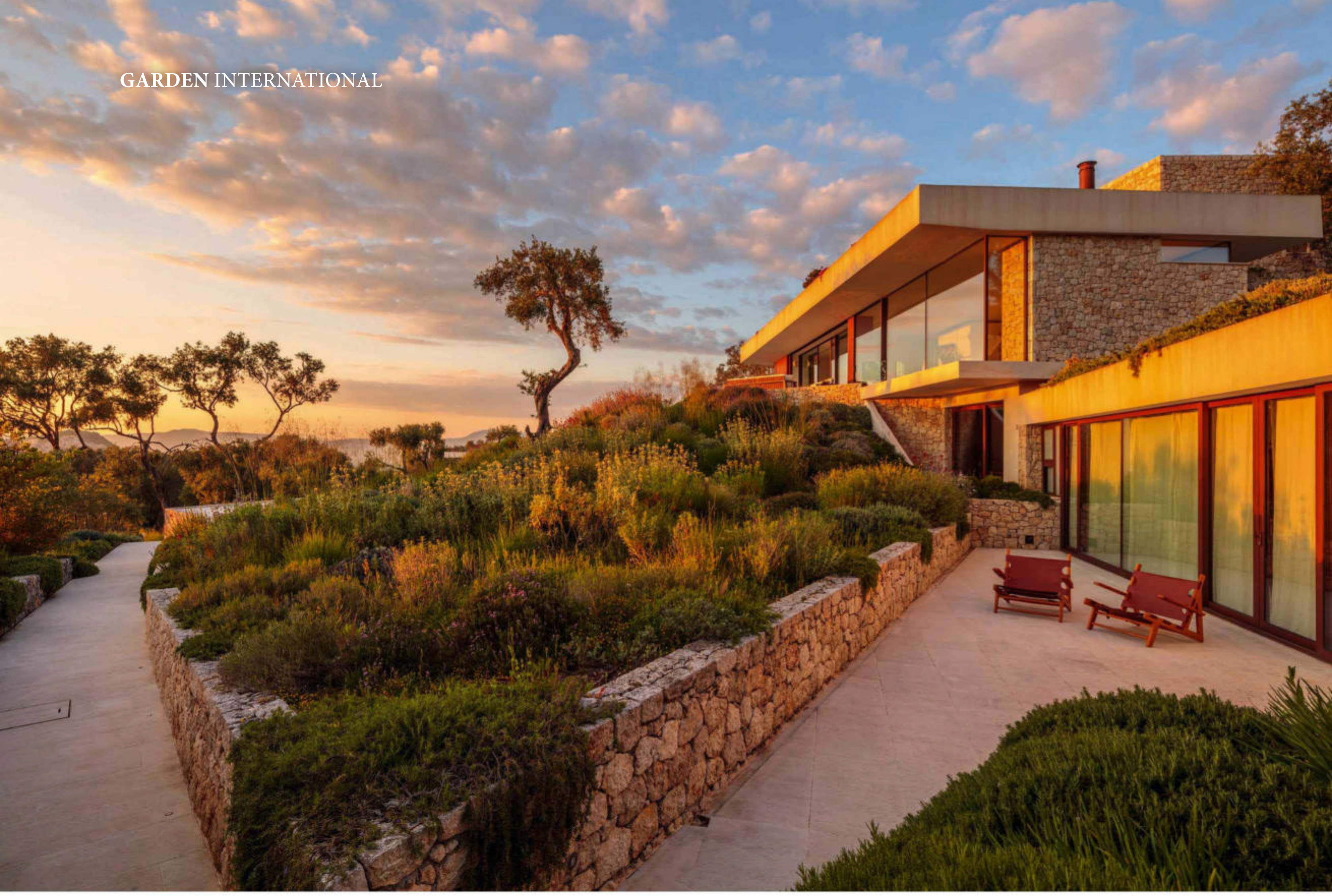
What Dry, naturalistic Mediterranean garden.
Where Corfu, Greece.
Size Approximately three acres.
Soil Shallow, free-draining, stony and alkaline.
Climate Mediterranean, with short rainy winters (November to April) and long, hot, dry summers, but with twice the rainfall of other parts of Greece.
Hardiness zone USDA 9a.

Bedded into a west-facing hillside, the stone-clad house and nature-inspired garden capture mesmerising views over the Ionian Sea and distant mountains. Sculpted olive trees and pomegranates (*Punica granatum*) punctuate the rich shrub and perennial planting below, featuring colourful *Centranthus ruber*, *Anthyllis cytisoides* and *Satureja thymbra*.

Natural selection

British designer Jennifer Gay has transformed a neglected, ancient olive grove into a sublime, sustainable garden in Corfu

WORDS **ZIA ALLAWAY** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLIVE NICHOLS**



Carved out of an abandoned olive grove on a rocky hillside in Corfu, there sits a dazzling garden with breathtaking views over the turquoise Ionian Sea. Taking her cues from nature, its British-born designer Jennifer Gay has sensitively bedded the garden into a natural landscape of wild maquis and ancient olive trees, using her encyclopaedic knowledge of Mediterranean flora to create a sort of heightened reality, with textures, colours and shapes poised in painterly perfection. It's a garden that celebrates the beauty of the Mediterranean coastline while providing a practical family space for her clients to enjoy.

The property belongs to Alexandra Mollof and her husband, who live in the UK but have Greek connections and were looking for a holiday home where they and their two children could enjoy Corfu's long, hot summers, immersed in nature. "Having fallen in love with the site's rugged terrain, towering trees and magnificent views of the sea and sky, the clients commissioned Paris-based architect Emmanuel Choupis of MXarchitecture to design a contemporary stone-clad house set into the hillside," explains Jennifer. "I was brought in at the beginning of the design process and worked closely with both clients and the architect to create a natural garden that respected the beauty of the site, while complementing the contemporary architecture and integrating both into the surrounding landscape. The clients also wanted to feel close to nature and harvest their own fruit and vegetables."

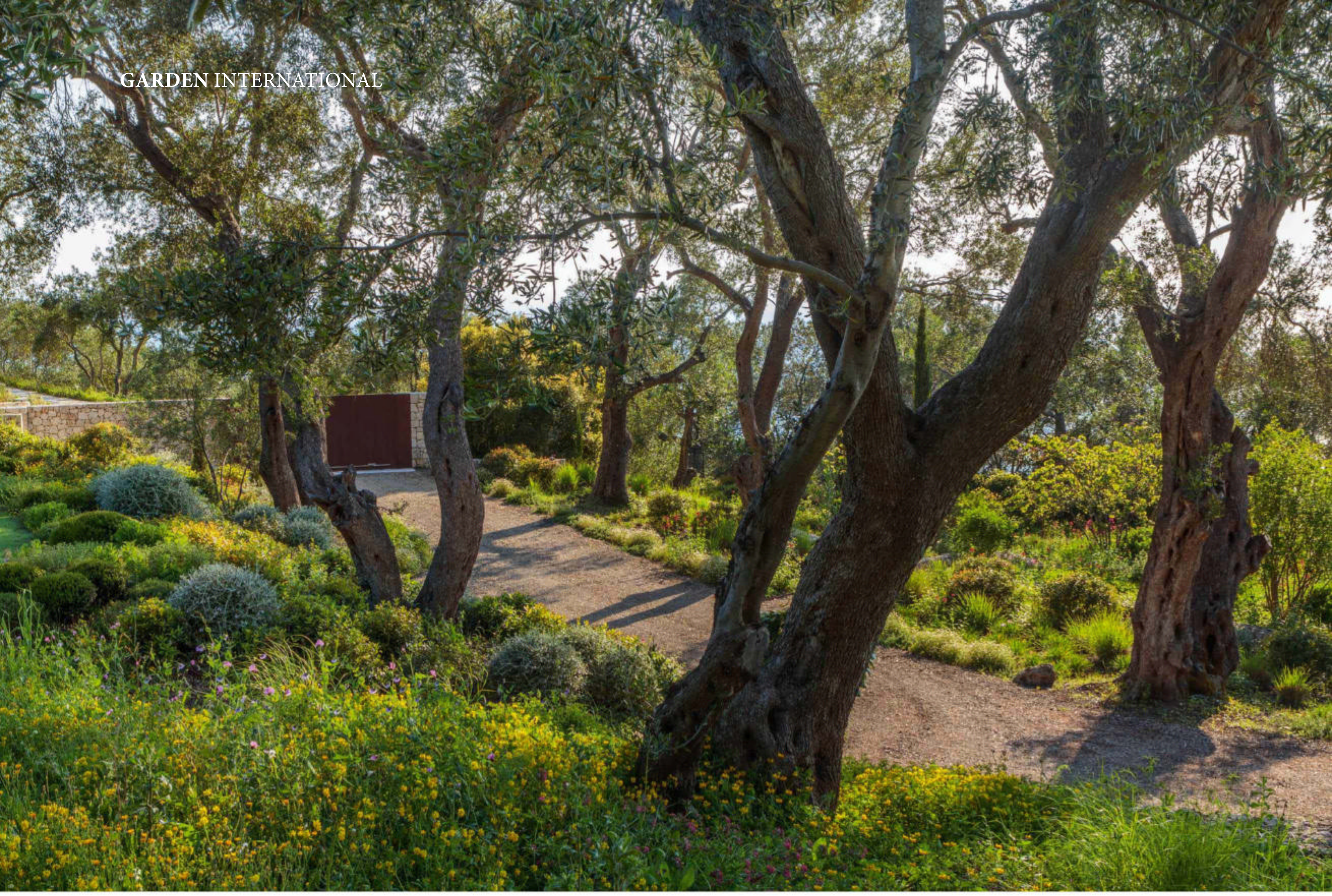
Inspired by the tough, drought-resilient plants grown by French nurseryman Olivier Filippi – and by the sensitivity of Dan Pearson's gardens – Jennifer set out her masterplan for the space. "As well as anchoring the buildings into their surroundings, I wanted to retain the character of the olive groves and associated flora," she says, "while creating spaces for entertaining, swimming and playing to fulfil the family's needs."

To help blur the lines between the building and the plants behind the house, Jennifer planted three roof gardens. Two have been filled with shrubs, grasses and perennials that mirror the planting in the garden beyond, while the third, larger roof, over the living room, features lower-growing succulents that tolerate the heat and exposure of this sunnier west-facing site. "The roofs have a practical function, too," Jennifer explains, "helping to insulate and regulate the internal temperature of the ▷

Above Jennifer has filled the slope that separates the house from the pool terrace below with drought-tolerant plants that offer summer interest, including *Cistus* x *pauranthus* 'Natacha', *Phlomis* 'Marina', *Oenothera lindheimeri* and trailing Corsican rosemary.

Right above At the rear of the house, a compacted earth path, edged with Corten steel, leads out to wilder parts of the garden. In this 'forest garden' area, Jennifer has underplanted olive trees with Mediterranean herbs such as *Origanum* 'Clara', *Salvia fruticosa* and *Salvia rosmarinus* 'Sappho'.

Right below On the roof garden above the kitchen, a deep layer of aggregates supports a wide selection of plants including *Leucophyllum frutescens* and *Euphorbia segetalis* var. *pinea*, while on the living-room roof across the courtyard, a shallower substrate is home to heat-resistant pink *Drosanthemum hispidum*, alongside various sedums, *Allium tuberosum* and *Iris lutescens*.



house." The clients also wanted a lawn close to the house, which Jennifer designed using *Zoysia matrella*, a drought-tolerant tufted grass with lower water needs than regular turf.

Emmanuel created a series of terraces around the house for dining and relaxing, including two inner courtyards outside the kitchen and the office. He and Jennifer then collaborated on steps leading up to a sunset viewing point and lounge area above the house, framed by fruit trees, herbs and other aromatics on the upper slopes. "I've screened the pool terrace below the building with a slope packed with colourful plants, and designed a pétanque court on an adjacent terrace, surrounded by wild planting," explains Jennifer. Compacted earth paths, edged with Corten steel, branch out from the pool into an increasingly wild and untouched area that includes the original terraced olive groves.

The plants are the stars of the show, and the garden's simple structure allows space for them to shine. "The planting palette was largely inspired by the Greek landscape, with plants from other Mediterranean climate zones mixed in to extend the flowering season or add drama," says Jennifer. "Their ability to withstand drought was a major consideration, and most were shipped in from Olivier Filippi's nursery in France, where they're grown in drought conditions to acclimatise them to the Mediterranean summers."

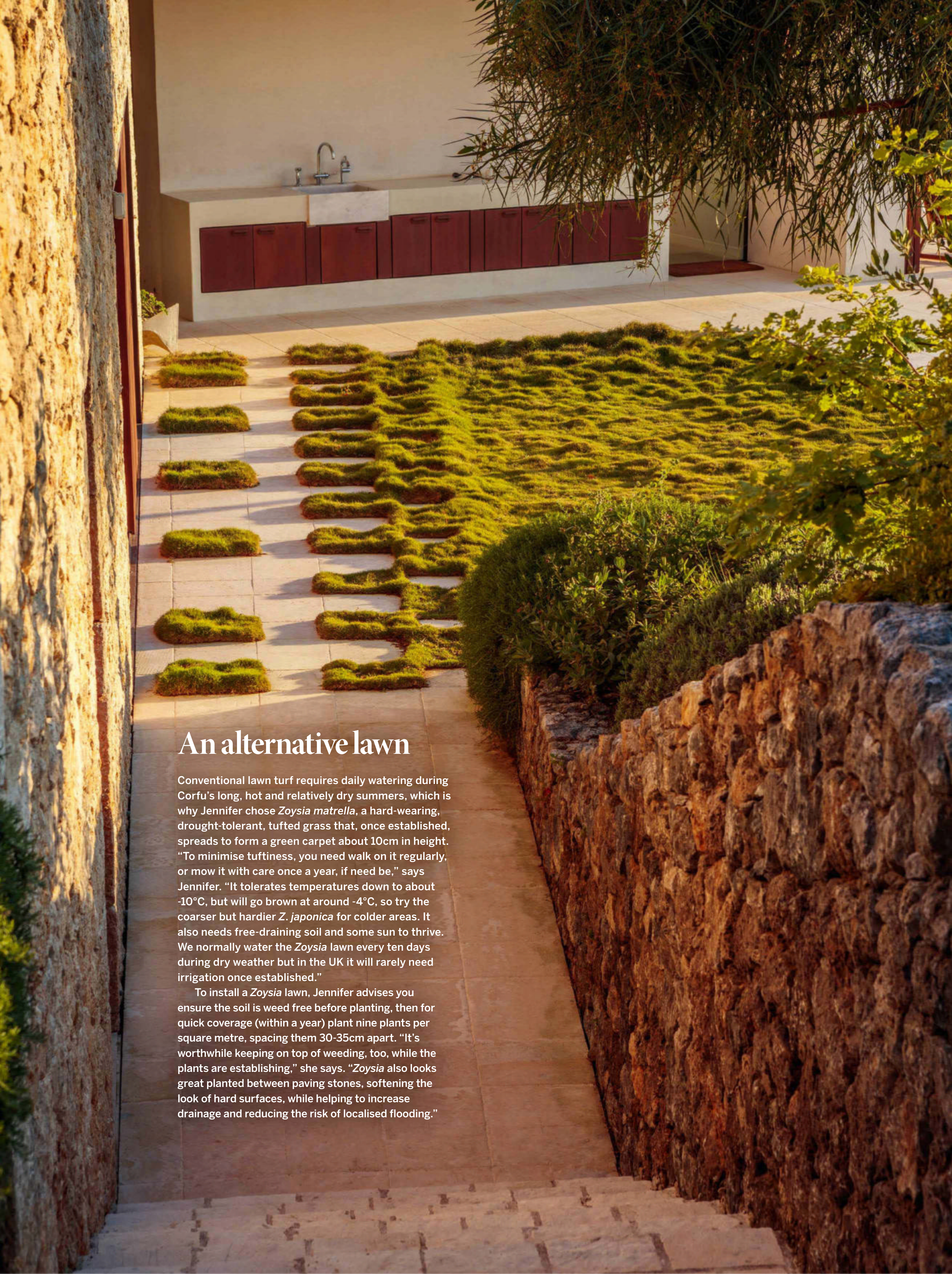
Throughout the garden, Jennifer has used a range of different planting styles, with the areas close to the house dedicated to high-impact plants. This is more colourful and comprises richer layers of interest and intricacy, although she has adopted a similar naturalistic theme to that used elsewhere in the garden. "Two-thirds is dedicated to grey and green foliage, with flowers coming and going throughout the year," she says, "while the remaining 30 per cent is a jewel-like mosaic of blue, pink, mauve and lime-green perennials, such as lavenders, gauras, centranthus, cistus and salvias, each with a long summer-flowering season."

Lower down the slope, groves of olive trees are growing among flower-rich meadows and deliver a small crop each year. Jennifer also made space here for a vegetable plot, and planted fruit trees, including apricots, figs, quince, nectarines, cherries, lemons and oranges on the terraces above the house. "I designed this area as a 'forest garden', where edible plants, such as herbs and vegetables, are grown in wild communities between the trees," she says.

Elsewhere, the planting mirrors the native *garrigue*, known in Greece as *phrygana* planting, which comprises low, ▷

Above An avenue of gnarled old olive trees, underplanted with drought-tolerant shrubs, including *Teucrium fruticans* and *Myrtus communis* 'Guilli', perennials and wild *Medicago orbicularis*, an annual that seeds itself into the mix each year.

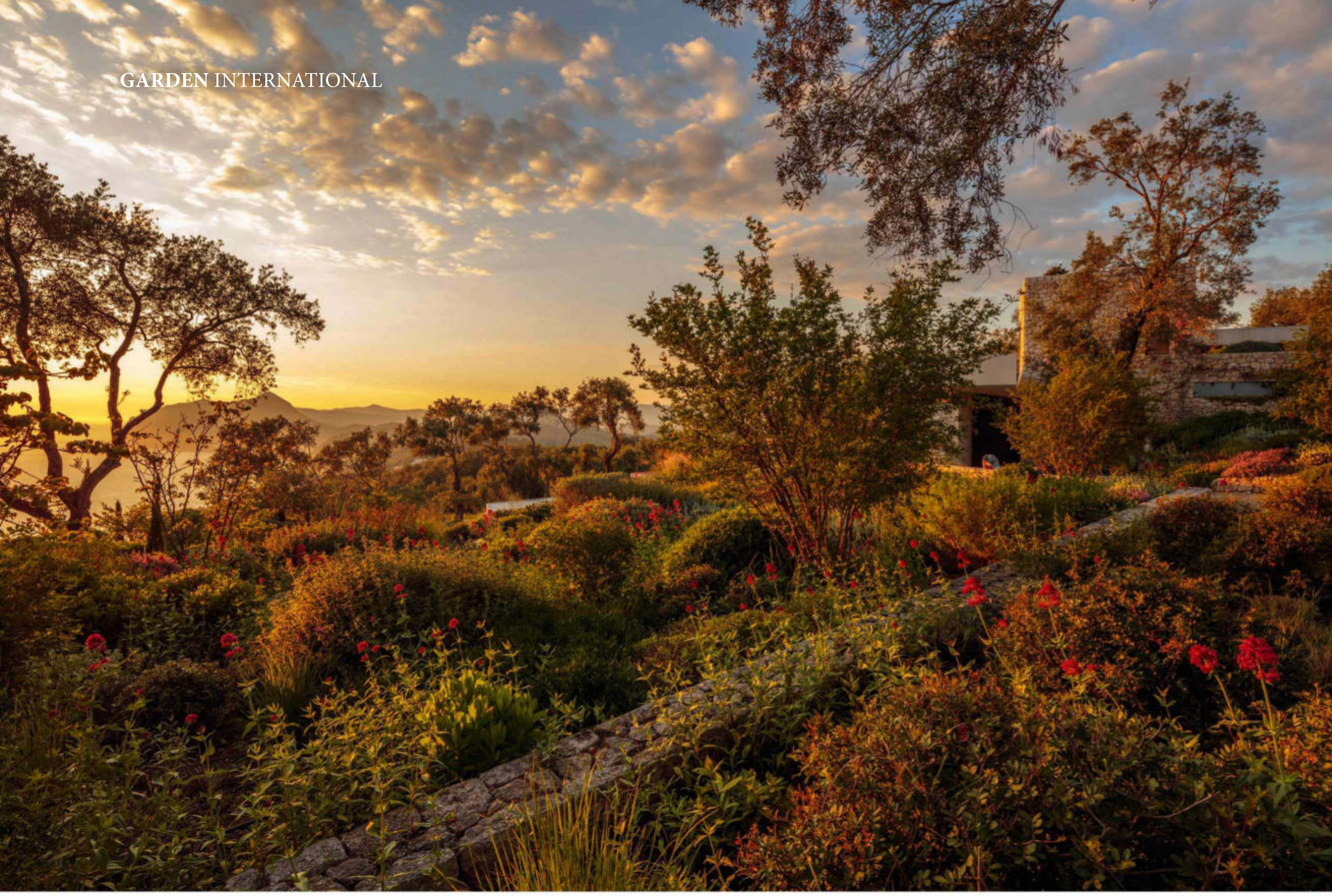
Right *Salvia rosmarinus* Prostrata Group and *Lavandula* x *ginginsii* 'Goodwin Creek Grey' line steps leading down to an outdoor kitchen where Jennifer used drought-resilient *Zoysia matrella* in place of a traditional lawn.



An alternative lawn

Conventional lawn turf requires daily watering during Corfu's long, hot and relatively dry summers, which is why Jennifer chose *Zoysia matrella*, a hard-wearing, drought-tolerant, tufted grass that, once established, spreads to form a green carpet about 10cm in height. "To minimise tuftiness, you need walk on it regularly, or mow it with care once a year, if need be," says Jennifer. "It tolerates temperatures down to about -10°C, but will go brown at around -4°C, so try the coarser but hardier *Z. japonica* for colder areas. It also needs free-draining soil and some sun to thrive. We normally water the *Zoysia* lawn every ten days during dry weather but in the UK it will rarely need irrigation once established."

To install a *Zoysia* lawn, Jennifer advises you ensure the soil is weed free before planting, then for quick coverage (within a year) plant nine plants per square metre, spacing them 30-35cm apart. "It's worthwhile keeping on top of weeding, too, while the plants are establishing," she says. "*Zoysia* also looks great planted between paving stones, softening the look of hard surfaces, while helping to increase drainage and reducing the risk of localised flooding."



▷ cushion-shaped shrubs such as *Phlomis* 'Le Chat', *Cistus* x *skanbergii*, *Lotus dorycnium*, *Rhamnus ludovici-salvatoris*, *Helichrysum italicum* and *Origanum onites*. The property is screened from public footpaths near the boundaries with a maquis mix of native evergreen and ever-grey shrubs, as well as cypress, carob and oak that offer height and structure.

Mature olive trees that had been left unpruned for many years had developed into tall, twisted silhouettes, and now Jennifer and her gardening team are maintaining them to create dramatic sculptural elements throughout the garden. "Each tree takes four to five hours to prune, but the effect is well worth the effort," she says.

Keen to maintain the character of the landscape and minimise the garden's carbon footprint, Jennifer and Emmanuel used a creamy-golden limestone from a local quarry for the walls around the house, while stone excavated during the build was used for the walls in the wilder areas.

A primary consideration for Jennifer was maintenance, which for such a large plot and the hilly terrain had to be manageable. "I'm always striving to be as sustainable as possible," she says. "So before the garden was installed, we built a 300-cubic-metre storage tank that collects water during the rainy season and summer downpours, which we use to irrigate the garden. Olivier Filippi's tough plants and others grown at local nurseries have kept watering to a minimum and it will reduce further as the plants establish. Another tip I picked up from Olivier is to clip the shrubs regularly when they're young, so that the developing roots have less top growth to maintain, which helps them to withstand drought."

The garden took almost four years to install because Jennifer phased the planting to coincide with the rainy season, thereby minimising its irrigation needs – water shortages are common on Corfu in the summer – and she is justifiably proud of the results. "The freedom to create large expanses of planting, and the way the garden complements its setting of big skies and dramatic sunsets, for me makes this one of my most rewarding designs," she says. "And the care taken in choosing the right plants and installing them well means almost 95 per cent have survived, giving us another reason to celebrate." ◻

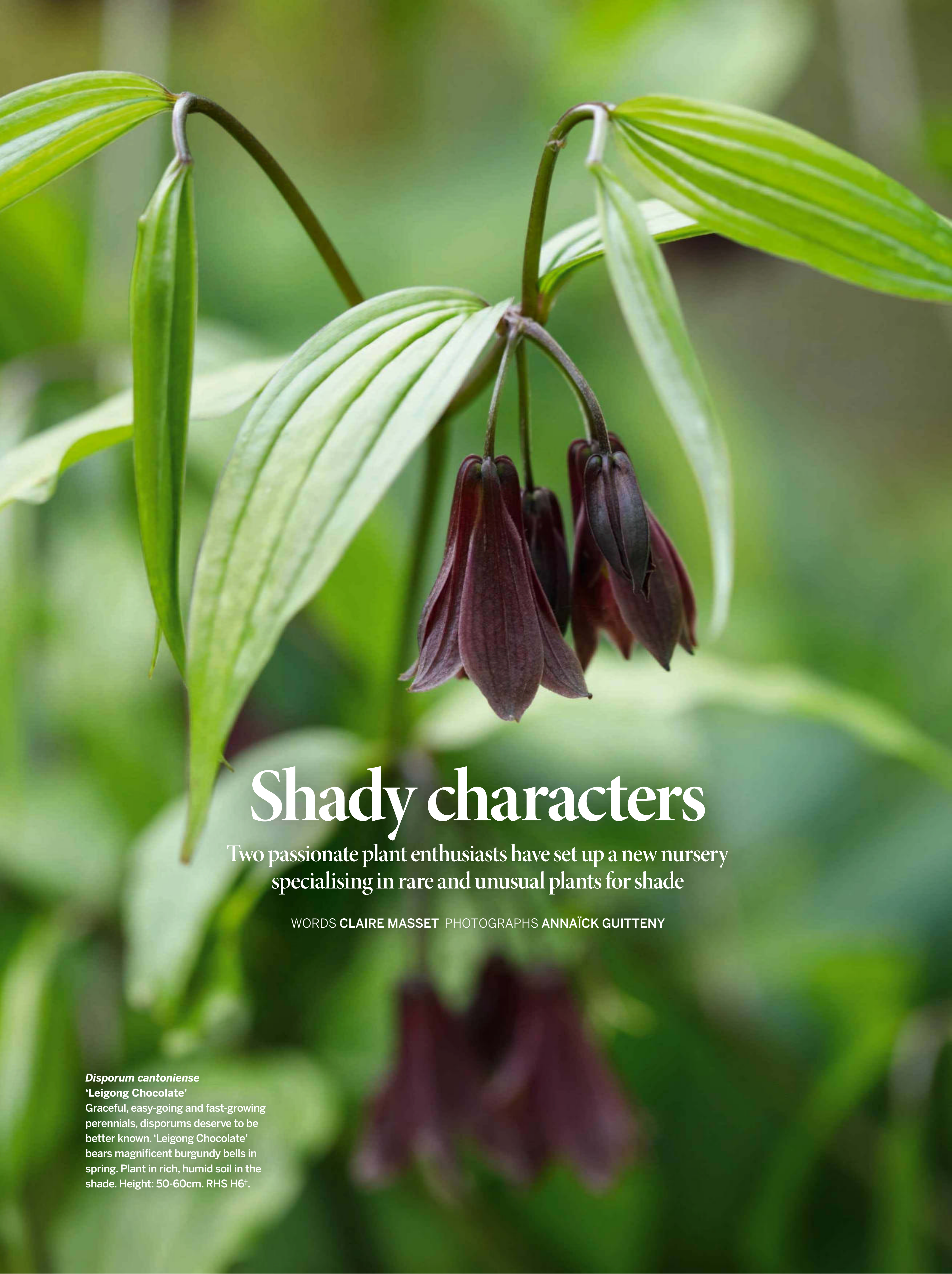
USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Jennifer Gay's work at **jennifergaylandscapes.com**

Above Blurring the line between the garden and surrounding hillside, Jennifer has blended Mediterranean natives, such as *Ballota pseudodictamnus*, *Pistacia lentiscus*, *Euphorbia ceratocarpa* and *Hyparrhenia hirta*, with other drought-lovers borrowed from similar climes.

Right A distinctive wooden bench from Brazil, placed at the entrance to the house, looks out over the rich mix of shrubs and perennial plants, including bright-red *Centranthus ruber* and *Phlomis* x *cytherea*.

The plants are the stars of the show, and the garden's simple structure allows space for them to shine

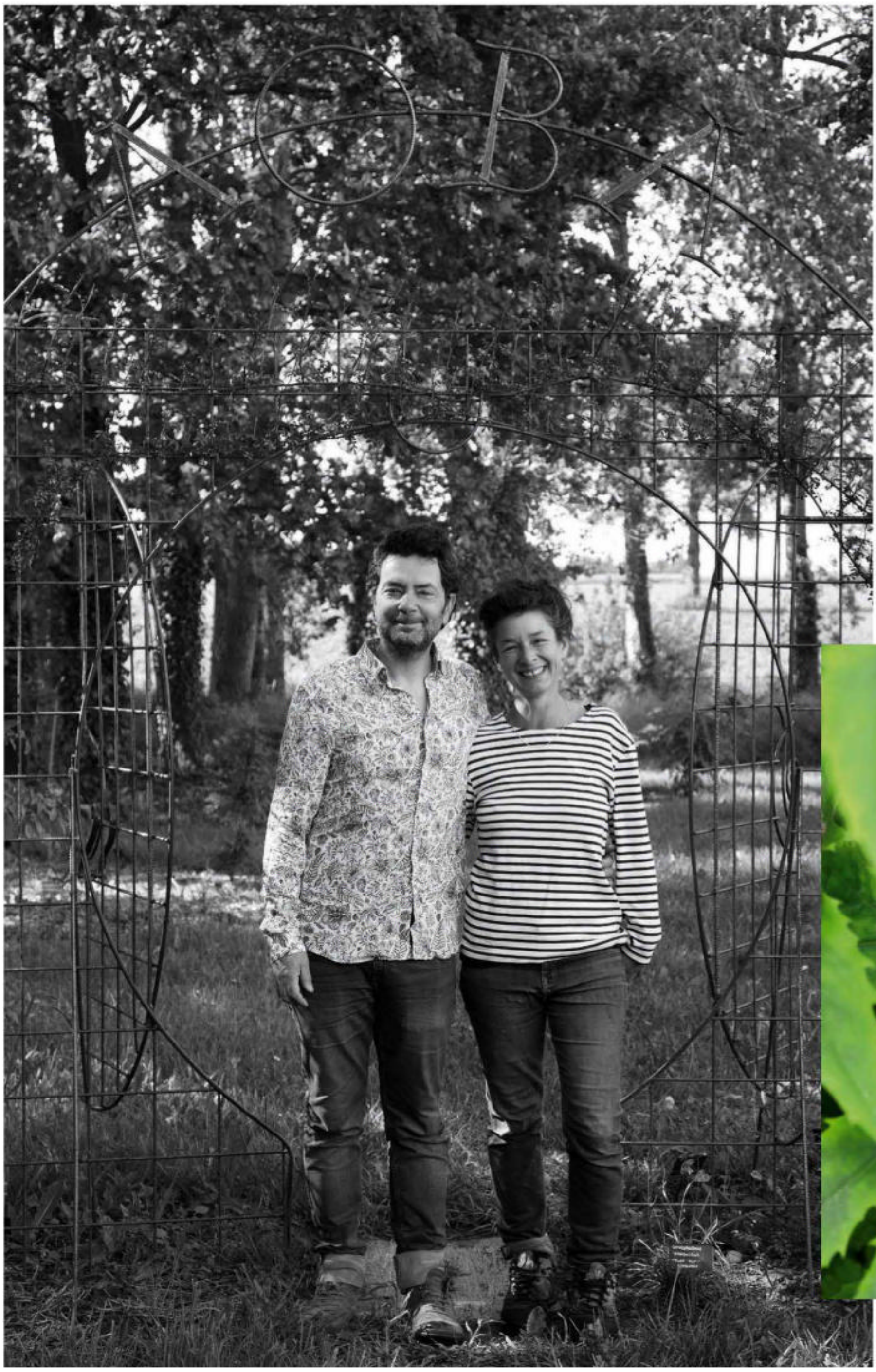


Shady characters

Two passionate plant enthusiasts have set up a new nursery specialising in rare and unusual plants for shade

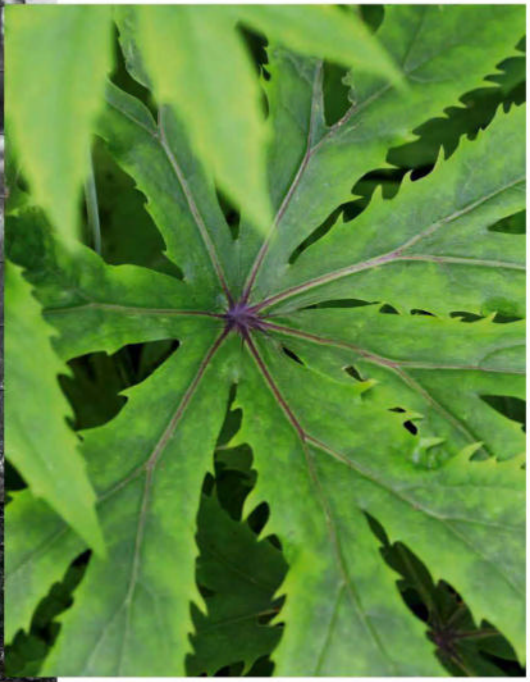
WORDS **CLAIRE MASSET** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANNAÏCK GUITTENY**

***Disporum cantoniense* 'Leigong Chocolate'**
Graceful, easy-going and fast-growing perennials, disporums deserve to be better known. 'Leigong Chocolate' bears magnificent burgundy bells in spring. Plant in rich, humid soil in the shade. Height: 50-60cm. RHS H6[†].



Left Cédric Basset and Manon Rivière in their nursery Pépinière Aoba, which specialises in shady plants.

Below *Syneilesis palmata* Known as the palmate umbrella plant, this mound-forming perennial is grown for its impressive jagged leaves. Small, pink-white flowers appear in late summer. Ideal for shade, as long as it isn't overly dry. Height and spread: 60cm x 60cm. RHS H7.



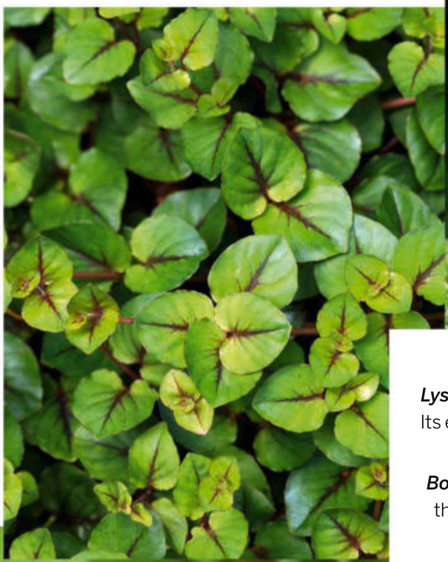
Nursery owners Cédric Basset and Manon Rivière don't do ordinary: they've spent their careers discovering and growing unusual plants. Since January 2020, they have been running Pépinière Aoba in Brittany, France. *Aoba* means greenery in Japanese, so it's an apt name for a nursery that specialises in species from Asia, with a focus on foliage, climbing and shade-loving plants. Its range is impressive, with more than 5,000 species, and includes national collections of epimediums, polygonatum, Japanese hydrangeas, species irises and Lardizabalaceae.

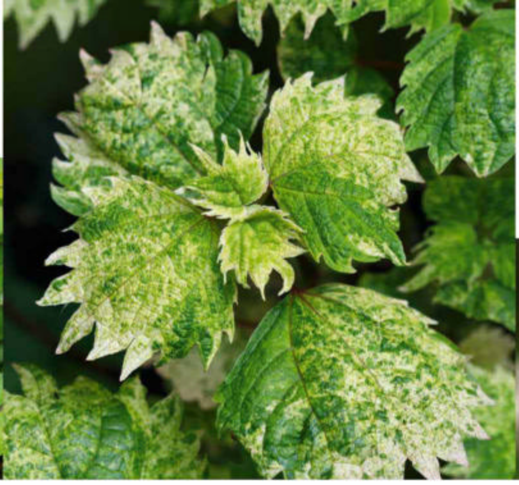
Before they set up Aoba, Cédric and Manon each had their own nursery in the east of France, where winters are cold and summers scorching, so it made sense for the couple to combine their two plant catalogues and make the move to milder northern Brittany, where they fell for an old farm with seven acres of land. Over the past four years, they have slowly replanted their stock. The old rapeseed fields, transformed with plantations of saplings, will eventually become a six-acre arboretum.

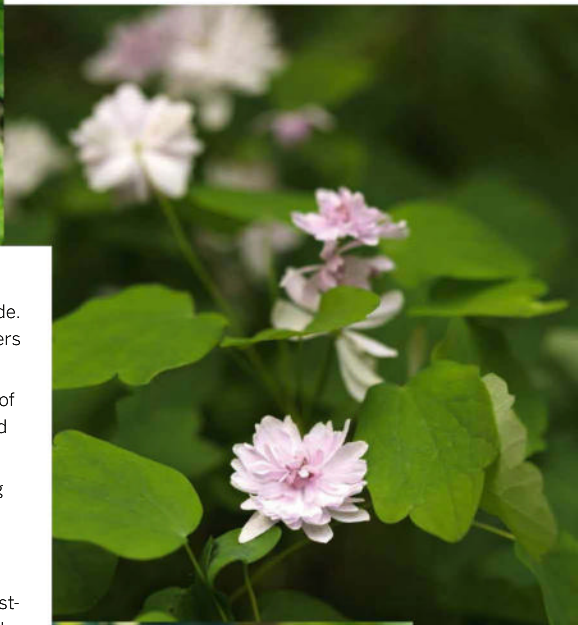
Under a canopy of established trees, they have created a shade garden filled with epimediums, arisaemas, polygonatums and disporums. Foliage is key element in this area with ferns, begonias and boehmerias, a cousin of the nettle that doesn't sting.

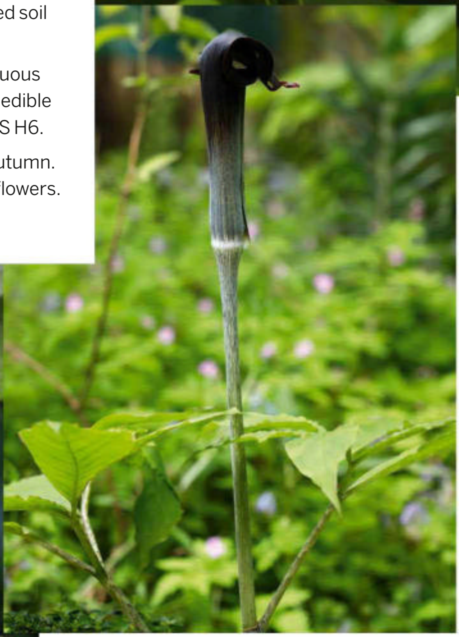
From the outset, the couple wanted to show their plants growing naturally. "A tree in a pot doesn't really speak to people," says Cédric. "You can't visualise what it will look like. But when you walk past a beautiful styrax in flower in May, you fall for it." Their plants are unusual, but they're also easy to look after and hardy. "There's enough diversity without having to rely on plants that are prone to disease and not very strong."

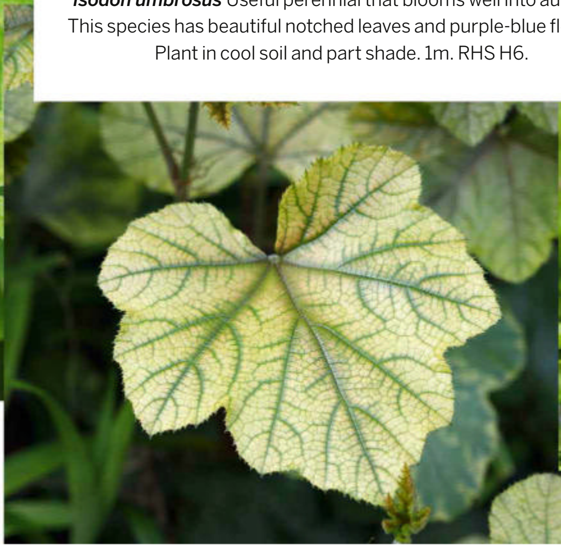
Unlike many modern nurseries and plant centres, the couple don't use pesticides ▷

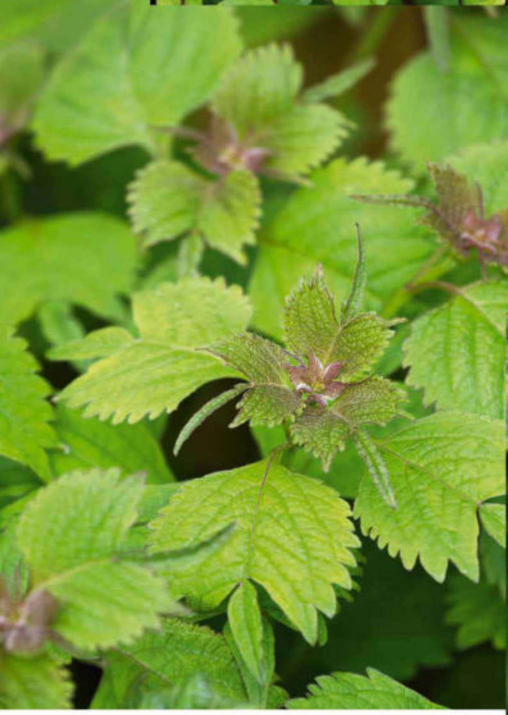












Clockwise from top left

***Lysimachia christinae* 'Zixin'** A hardy groundcover plant for shade. Its evergreen foliage has purple-red veins, and small, yellow flowers appear from June to July. 7.5cm x 2m. RHS H6.

***Boehmeria platanifolia* 'Aoba'** Cédric's own variegated cultivar of this non-stinging member of the nettle family. Likes rich soil and will brighten areas of deep shade. 1.5m x 1m. RHS H5.

***Anemonella thalictroides* 'Shiozaki'** Compact, clump-forming Japanese cultivar of the North American rue anemone. Grow in part shade, ideally in moist, well-drained soil, to encourage longer flowering. 15cm. RHS H6.

Arisaema mayebarae Early blooming tall arisaema with an almost-black spathe in spring. Grow in partial shade in well-drained soil and, ideally, sheltered from winter rain. 1m. RHS H4.

Rubus buergeri Perfect as groundcover, this small deciduous shrub has evergreen foliage and white flowers followed by edible berries. Will cover several square metres. 10cm x 2m. RHS H6.

Isodon umbrosus Useful perennial that blooms well into autumn. This species has beautiful notched leaves and purple-blue flowers. Plant in cool soil and part shade. 1m. RHS H6.

▷ or rely on heated greenhouses. "When I cultivate plants," explains Cédric, "I don't want to pollute my soil in the process. Our plants aren't grown in an artificial environment so they're not fragile. This also helps to limit parasites, which are far more prevalent in greenhouses. The fact that we have a large number of varieties and plant families also helps limit the spread of disease."

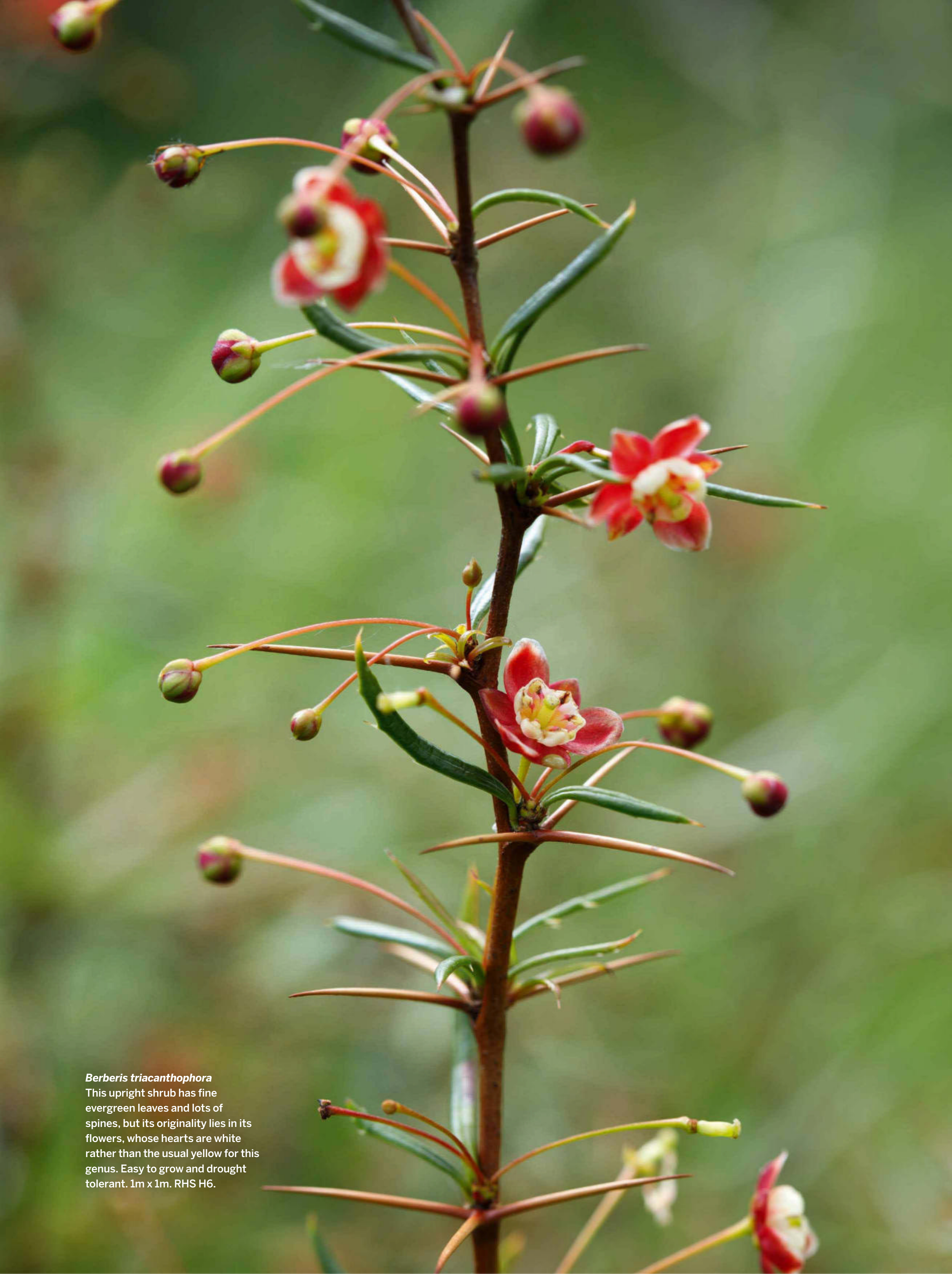
Aside from his obvious passion, it is dedication and thoroughness that come to mind when talking to Cédric. All the plants are numbered and every time he adds a new one, he makes sure he keeps the details of where it's come from. "When we moved to Brittany, I actually started my plant inventory from scratch – it took me four years, but I like to know this information. It's more for me than anything else, but we do work with botanical gardens who are pleased to have this kind of information."

This approach to horticulture may stem from Cédric's previous career. For 11 years, he worked as curator of collections at the botanical garden in Lyon, looking after over 20,000 plants, and before that, five years at one of Europe's most impressive bamboo gardens, the Bambouseraie de Prafrance in southern France. While there, he took the opportunity to visit China to see bamboos in their natural habitat, and discovered a whole new flora. "There was such an incredible variety and it was a revelation in terms of shade-loving plants. At the time, there wasn't much choice in French nurseries if you were looking for shade-lovers. When I saw the diversity in China, I thought: 'Why should we just rely on ivy and lily of the valley when you can have epimediums, aspidistras and so many other plants?'"

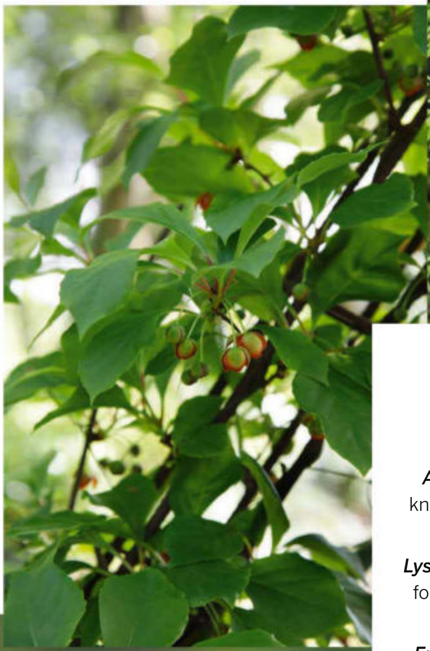
After his first journey to China, Cédric went back every year. He also visited India, Nepal, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. "I remember seeing forest floors covered in flowering hydrangeas in Japan, prairies smothered in lady's slipper orchids in China, 15m-high flowering rhododendrons in Nepal," he says. "There's such diversity – ▷

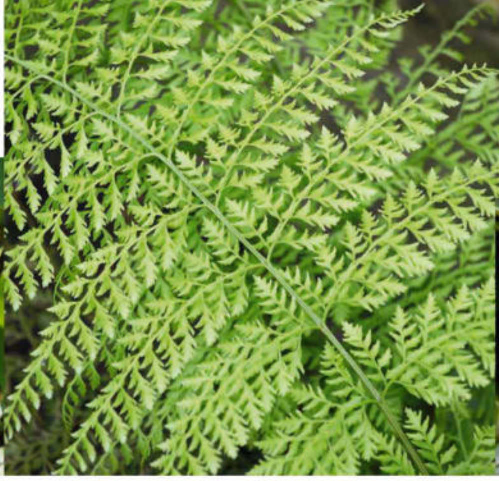
***Epimedium* 'Red Maximum'** Known as barrenwort, epimediums are easy plants, resistant to both dry weather and slugs. This striking cultivar is distinguished by its very dark flowers. Grow in shade or part shade. 50cm x 50cm. RHS H6.

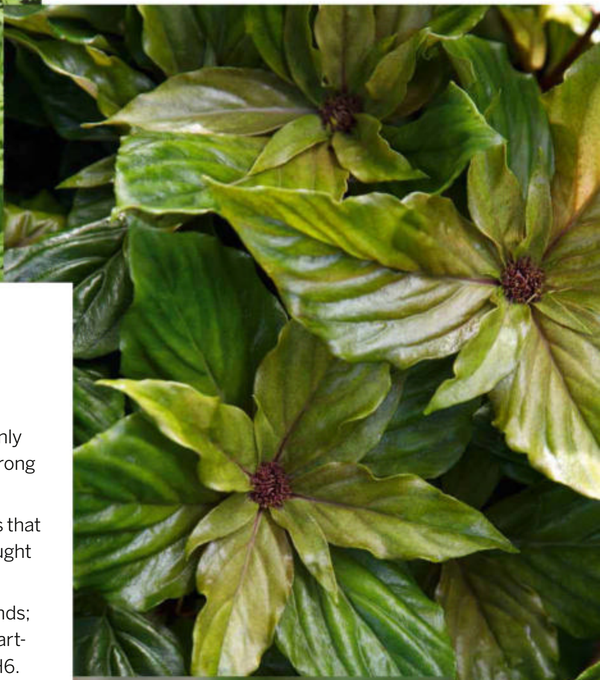
When I saw the diversity in China, I thought: 'Why should we just rely on ivy and lily of the valley when you can have so many other plants?'

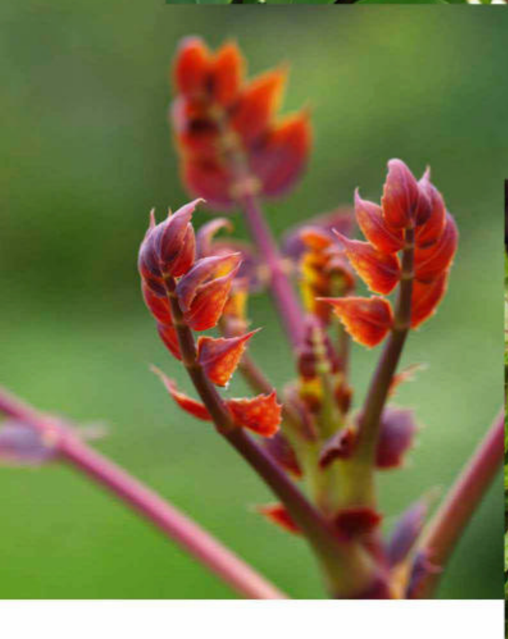


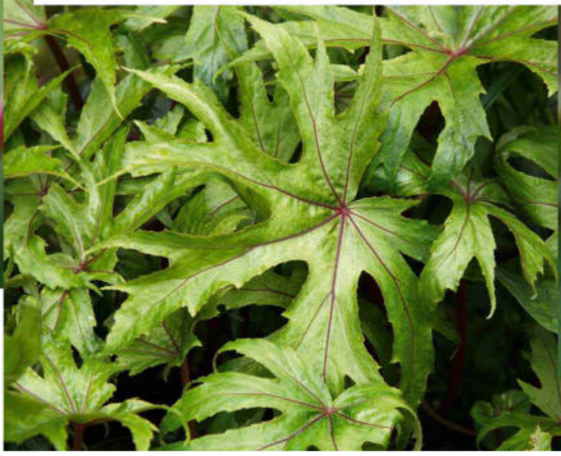
Berberis triacanthophora
This upright shrub has fine evergreen leaves and lots of spines, but its originality lies in its flowers, whose hearts are white rather than the usual yellow for this genus. Easy to grow and drought tolerant. 1m x 1m. RHS H6.

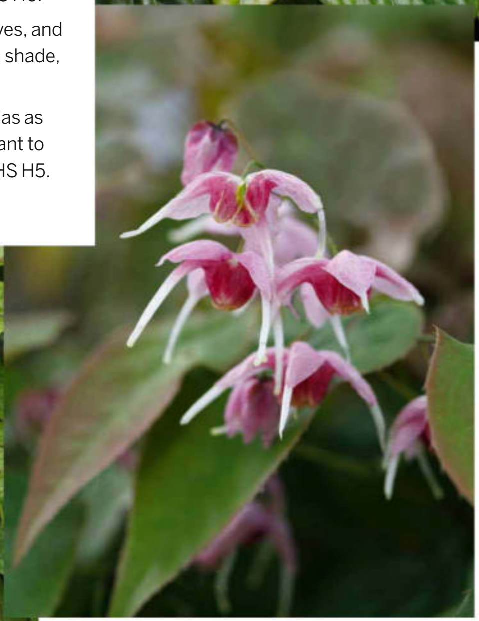












Clockwise from top left
Schisandra sphenanthera A deciduous climber with unusual orange-red flowers. Easy to grow in part shade in any good garden soil. 3m. RHS H5.

Arachniodes standishii Clump-forming evergreen, commonly known as the upside-down fern because its fronds look the wrong way round. Enjoys cool soil. 45cm x 80cm. RHS H5.

Lysimachia paridiformis Striking evergreen with glossy leaves that form a ruff around its yellow spring flowers. Can tolerate drought though not for long. 40cm x 40cm. RHS H5.

***Epimedium* 'Pretty in Pink'** Forms compact evergreen mounds; its pink flowers with white spurs have deep-pink centres. Heart-shaped leaves turn bronze in autumn. 45cm x 40cm. RHS H6.

Begonia pedatifida A hardy begonia with deeply lobbed leaves, and clusters of pink flowers in late summer and autumn. Plant in shade, in moist, well-drained soil. 60cm x 60cm. RHS H5.

Mahonia duclouxiana* x *M. japonica Cédric loves mahonias as they're hardy, evergreen, wonderfully fragrant and resistant to drought. This one flowers all through winter. 1.5m x 1m. RHS H5.

†Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ you walk just a few steps and you see a new plant. You can't help but be amazed. And it puts you in your place: you feel tiny among nature. I could contemplate the natural world indefinitely."

Cédric readily admits that Manon's horticultural training was more thorough than his. Having graduated with a diploma in garden design, she went on to study professional horticulture, after which she opened a nursery specialising in climbers. She has a soft spot for akebias, some of which bear the most incredible edible fruit. Back in 2016, her *Akebia trifoliata* x *longeracemosa* won first prize in the climbing plant category at the famous Spring Plant Festival of the Château de Saint-Jean-de-Beauregard, just south of Paris. But, as the Aoba nursery stock demonstrates, Manon's passion for unusual climbers knows almost no bounds. Alongside an impressive choice of clematis, ivies, honeysuckles and hydrangeas, you'll also find aristolochias, ampelopsis, berchemias, celastrus, stauntonias and more.

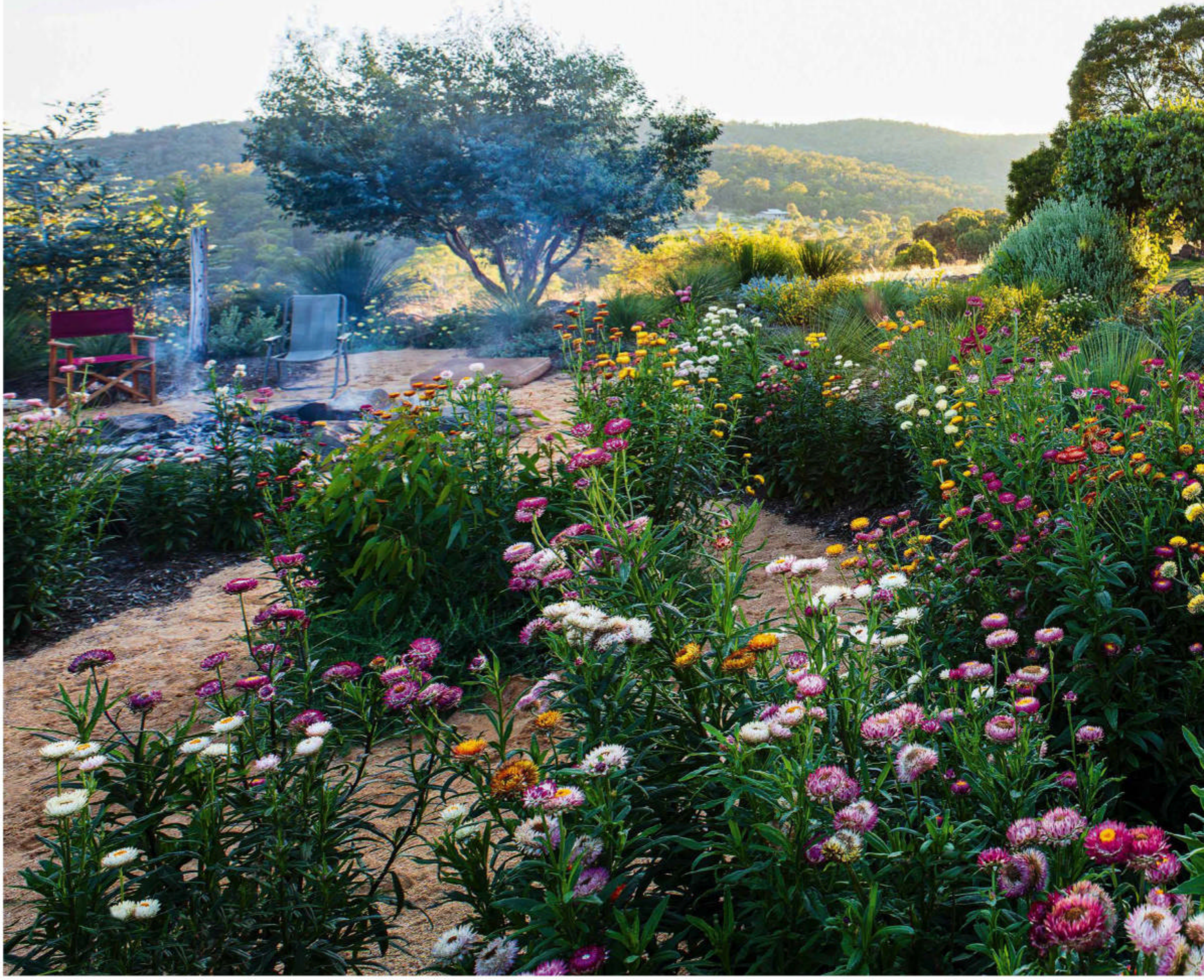
Keen to spread their knowledge beyond the confines of their nursery, Manon and Cédric produce a horticultural magazine featuring articles designed to introduce people to their extraordinary plants. Cédric has a handful of books to his name, too, published by the esteemed French publishing house, Ulmer. His most popular tome, which came out in 2021, is *Toutes les plantes pour l'ombre* [*All plants for shade*]. As the blurb rightly states: 'Shade in the garden is not a problem, it's an opportunity!' With its remarkable range of extraordinary plants, there are opportunities aplenty at Aoba nursery. And, like its plants, it keeps growing. "Every winter we add to our stock," says Cédric. "The garden isn't full, and we just can't help ourselves." □

USEFUL INFORMATION
Address Pépinière Aoba, La Touche au Burgot, 35460 Saint Ouen la Rouerie, France.
Tel +33 (0)7 67 30 37 98 / (0)6 09 48 24 85.
Web pepiniere-aoba.com

VISIONARY SPACES

The gardens of the future are diverse and beautiful. We take a look at four boundary-pushing gardens – both private and public – around the world that are addressing sustainability and climate change with style

WORDS GIACOMO GUZZON PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS



GLENLUCE

Designers Michael Wright and Catherine Rush (Rush Wright Associates). **Location** Glenluce, Victoria, Australia.

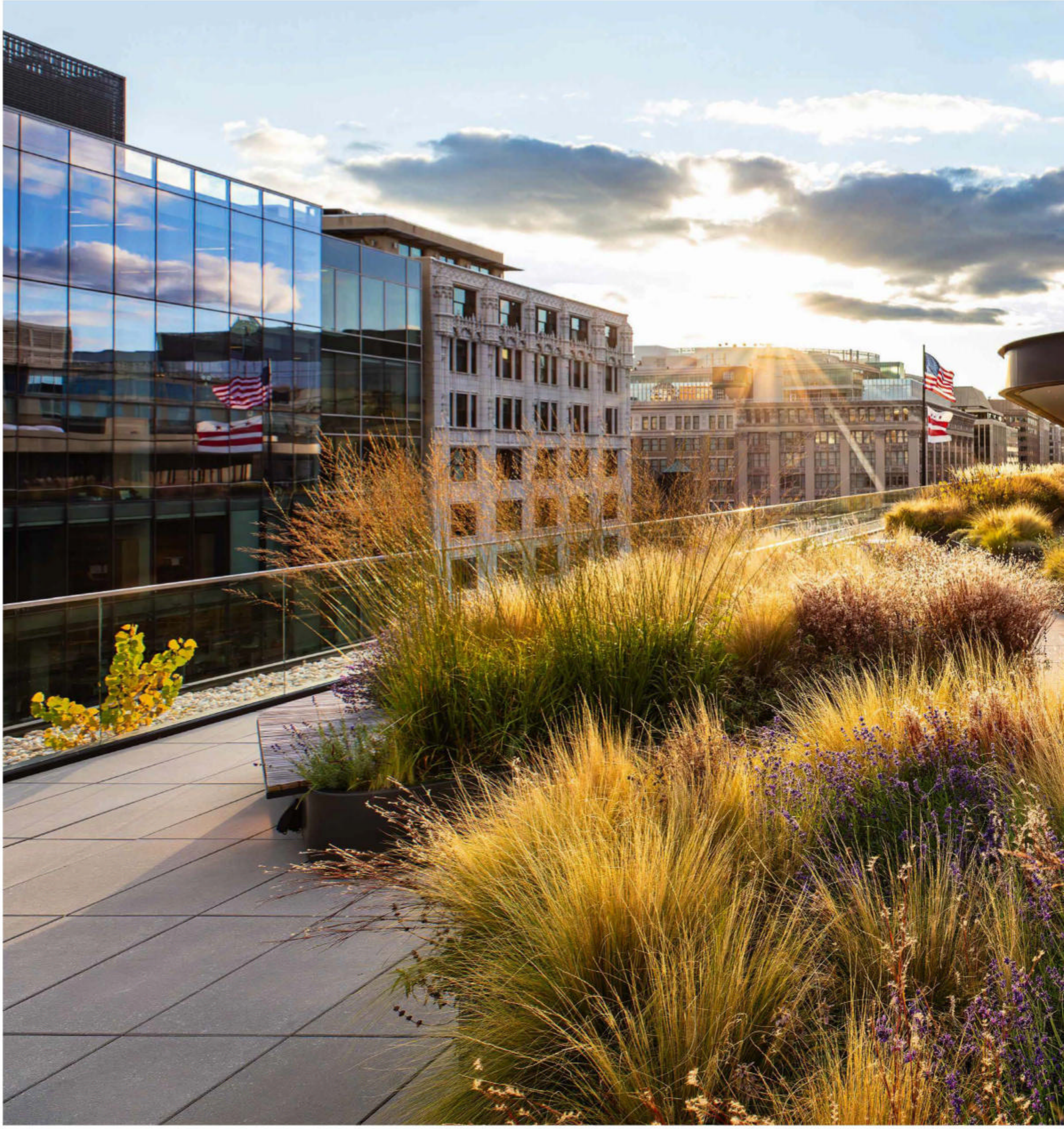
Catherine Rush and Michael Wright are founding directors of Melbourne-based landscape architecture firm Rush Wright Associates. Each with over 30 years of experience in the field, they lead a team of 15 landscape architects.

Their weekend home in Glenluce, northwest of Melbourne, experiences extreme climatic conditions: hot summers, prolonged droughts, and regular bushfires. In front of the tiny, west-facing house, helped by their friend, fellow landscape architect Thomas Gooch, they created and built a garden inspired by the wind-shaped dunes of Wyperfeld National Park, western Victoria. Finger-shaped, slightly mounded planting areas, reminiscent of the dunes, are interspersed with elongated, sand-covered paths. A generous stone firepit area – the garden's focal point, built with local rocks – is positioned to make the most of

stunning views of the surrounding area, and, on a clear night, a vast, star-filled sky.

The whole garden is like a giant creek bed, capable of acting as a reservoir, covered with a layer of 10cm of sand, below which there is a geotextile (permeable fabric), and 20cm of gravel under the paths. Underlying clay soil prevents rapid water infiltration and forms a perfect base for containing stormwater. Buff sand mimics the tones of dry grass covering the paddocks around the property, visually blending the garden with its surroundings, particularly in summer. Fire-retardant plants, such as *Atriplex nummularia* (Australian saltbush) create a native, fire-protective buffer between the garden and adjacent paddock, along with the iconic grass tree, *Xanthorrhoea* 'Supergrass', a hybrid cross between *X. johnsonii* and *X. glauca*. *Xerochrysum bracteatum* (native, drought-tolerant strawflowers) provide colourful accents for months and self-seed freely. Resilient exotic species from the Mediterranean and US arid regions are planted closer to the house.

Michael and Catherine have created a low-budget garden that incorporates smart strategies for long-term success in a challenging, fire-prone environment. It also recreates the wow factor of the Australian bush in a small, designed space. ▷



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR MEMORIAL LIBRARY ROOF GARDEN

Designers Oehme, van Sweden (OvS). **Location** Washington, DC, USA.

The Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Library, built in 1972 in downtown Washington, DC, is a public building designed by notable Modernist architect Mies van der Rohe. Of heavy construction, the library required modernisation without altering the original structure.

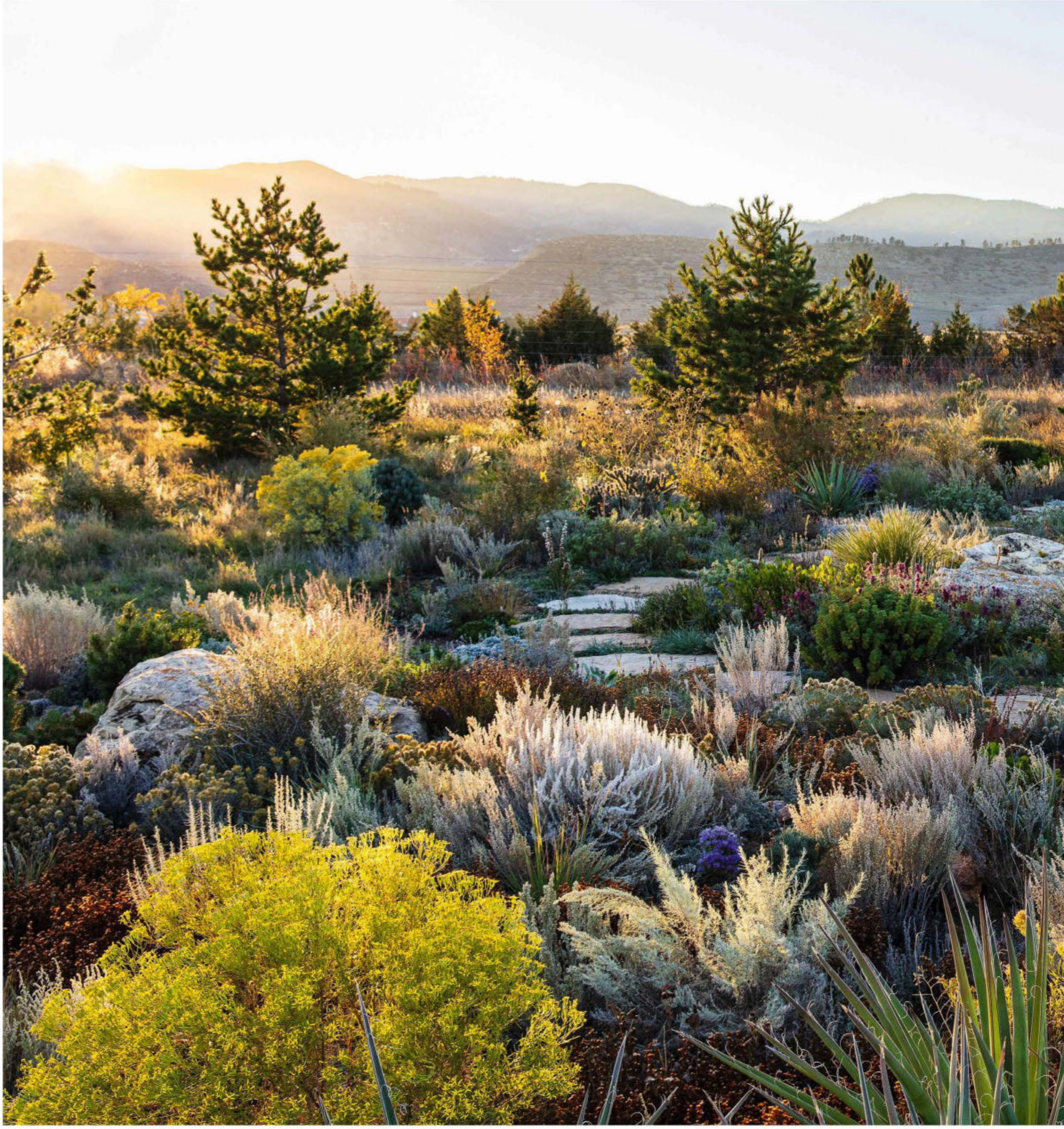
Oehme, van Sweden (OvS) landscape architects were appointed in 2015 to develop the project's landscape areas, joining the construction team of Mecanoo Architects, supported by local OTJ Architects.

Two extensive green roofs were created. The first, covering a newly constructed 2,675-square-metre, upper-level deck, is

planted with drought-tolerant sedum to capture stormwater and help mitigate the heat-island effect, while serving as a viewing garden for dwellers of surrounding taller office buildings. The second roof, which also includes a drought-tolerant sedum carpet on the west side, transformed the fifth-floor flexible events and education space into a 1,600-square-metre public roof terrace.

Drought-tolerant grasses and perennials feature throughout. A native pollinator garden with regional species from the Mid-Atlantic provides colour and wildlife value, while a sensory garden anchoring the southeast corner of the terrace provides texture and scent. A seasonal viewing garden at the terrace entry features plants offering dramatic annual changes, and large swathes of ornamental grasses for winter structure. All planting areas sit within large, raised planters set back from the terrace perimeter; a requirement of the preservation rules of historic buildings that no plants be visible from street level.

This public roof garden in the middle of Washington, DC, with its educational, immersive and aesthetic aspects, reaffirms the crucial role of such places for urban dwellers. ▷



LAUREN SPRINGER'S HOME GARDEN

Designer Lauren Springer. **Location** Colorado, USA.

For her own garden, American designer Lauren Springer wanted a wild garden that distilled the essence of the nearby Rocky Mountains landscape. Her naturalistic and textural style is informed by what she sees as 'necessity': to reflect the challenges of location and an ever-more extreme climate. "I think there's a lot to learn from hard-scrabble planting in a ferocious climate with lean soil," says Lauren. "We've had to be pioneers with our plant choices for a long time."

The biggest challenge came in blending the garden harmoniously with the surrounding mountainous terrain. "Textures, forms and subtle non-flower colours have their own beauty and offer a big lesson in gardening in extremes," says Lauren. While the lush, floral feel of more generous and temperate northern hemisphere climates occurs in May/June, she prefers the beauty in

her garden in late summer and autumn, with its wide view where light comes to play.

With the help of friends, to place about 25 tons of rock, Lauren started her four-acre home garden four years ago. One quarter of it is dedicated to the wild, short-grass prairie, and another to mixed plantings with trees, shrubs, hardy cacti, small bulbs, native wildflowers, and herbaceous plants (mainly native species) to increase diversity and wildlife – Lauren feels a duty to create an oasis for all creatures in tune with the environment. Many of the plants were propagated by Lauren through cuttings and seeds collected in the wild. She has also introduced several plants in the trade, such as *Muhlenbergia reverchonii* 'Undaunted', *M. rigens* 'Girl Next Door', *Oenothera fremontii* 'Shimmer', a *Salvia greggii* hybrid, *S.* 'Ultra Violet', and *Epilobium canum* 'Flame Thrower'.

The garden is planted with species that don't need additional irrigation after establishment, but even so Lauren carefully manages their watering needs during drought. Although it is still only half finished, Lauren isn't stressed; she enjoys the ongoing nature of editing, nurturing and being in the garden. It has achieved a unique North American mountain voice: quiet, subtle, yet strong. ▷

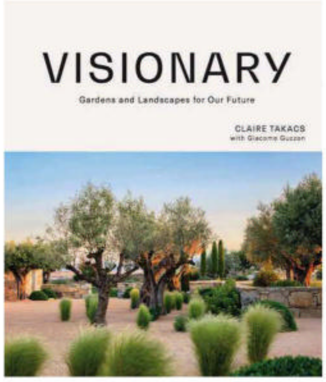
LANDSMEER

Designer Arjan Boekel. **Location** Landsmeer, the Netherlands.

Dutch landscape architect Arjan Boekel created this immersive, wild and intimate private garden in Landsmeer, north of Amsterdam, for its owners to be embraced by plants and observe nature.

The property has a natural swimming pond and a flowering meadow area. The meadow was planted for a long flowering season with a mix of mainly Eurasian steppe-plants and North American prairie perennials.

In the following years, the planting was filled in, with native plants such as ox-eye daisies, white campion and wild carrot allowed to self-seed and grow wild in the garden. At the garden edges, woody plants create a buffer and filter wind from across the polder while allowing a visual connection with the rural landscape. Native and non-native plants, wet and dry habitats, and environmentally friendly maintenance practices attract a wide variety of insects, amphibians and birds. In contrast to neighbouring, conventionally maintained plots, Arjan has created a biodiversity refuge. ◻



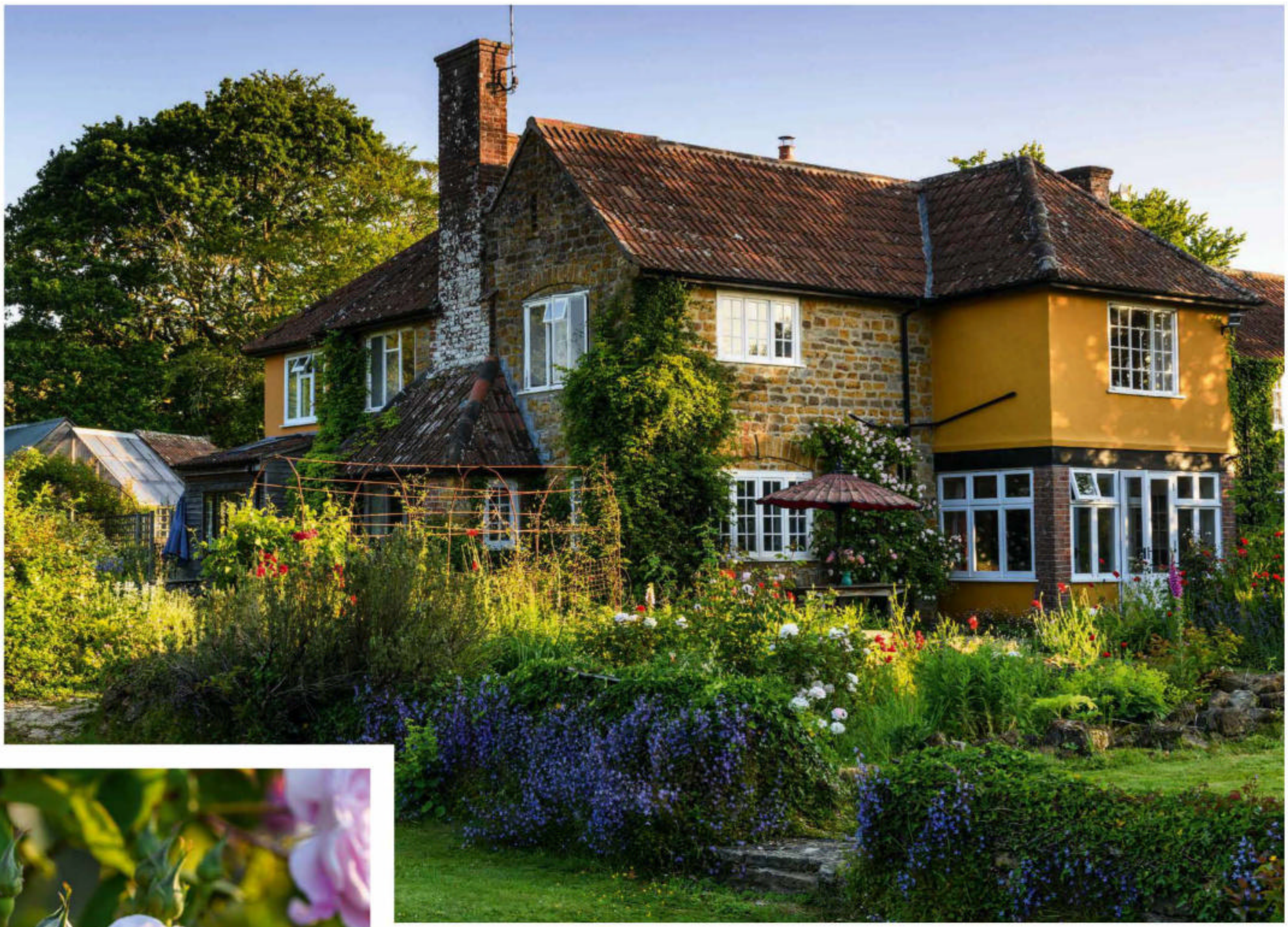
BUY THE BOOK
This is an edited extract from *Visionary: Gardens and Landscapes for our Future* by Claire Takacs (Hardie Grant Books, £36), out on 11 April.
hardiegrant.com

LEARNING TO LET GO

Grower **Charlie Ryrie** details her personal journey from intensive flower farming to lower-maintenance gardening, adapting to life's challenges

PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

Charlie Ryrie in the Dorset garden she tended for a decade, where relaxed *Iris sibirica*, *Libertia chilensis* Formosa Group and *Camassia leichtlinii* mark the transition from the main garden into the wilder woodland area.



Above By the house, Charlie made beds filled with mixed perennials, roses and annuals. Creeping bellflower *Campanula poscharkyana* covers the walls.

Left *Rosa* 'Fantin-Latour' is a long-term favourite.

Below *Iris sibirica* are happy in the heavy clay.

There are many stories in this garden. I arrived on a whim because the place refused to sell after my mother died. There were plans to sell it at auction, but I didn't want that to happen as my mother loved it so much here. So I bought it myself. I dug many new beds, removed most of the non-cutting plants (and conifers) that were growing in the garden and moved my cut-flower business from Herefordshire on several lorries.

Back when I started growing, in Herefordshire, more than 20 years ago, I gave myself an acre to fill with mixed perennials; I planted foliage and added bulbs and annuals. I planned to concentrate on mail order, but soon events and weddings took over. Within five years, I had expanded into another three acres.

I remember my joy at the first massed tulips and blocks of dancing white corncockles, my slight smugness at producing spectacular delphiniums. The Herefordshire light clay soil was accommodating, perhaps as excited as I was to be hosting such variety after years as starved pony paddocks.

It was wonderful to have an excuse to experiment with growing whatever I wanted, but I soon found it hard to retain excitement for rows of neat seedlings and well-weeded beds. I enjoyed using foraged and wild materials alongside beauties from the cutting field, so I planted more foxgloves, lysimachias, crocosmias and persicarias. I dispensed with dahlias and cut down on annuals. I wanted wilder flowers, more diversity.

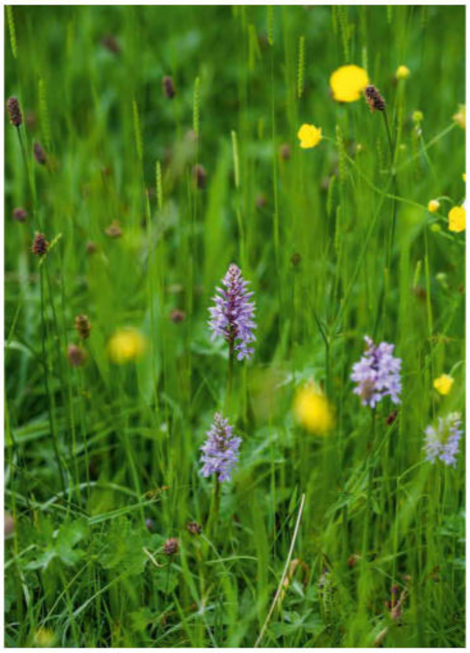
After a decade, I moved here to warmer, damper Dorset, which forced more changes to my palette. The soil is heavy, poorly draining greedy clay, which I fed and mulched with muck and composts in early winter, but otherwise left. Many perennials that came with me sulked or worse, so I invested in several hundred ▷

It was wonderful to have an excuse to experiment with growing whatever I wanted, but I soon found it hard to retain excitement for rows of neat seedlings and well-weeded beds

Sweet rocket took a while to spread in the heavy clay, a pleasing foil to the bright-red poppies and the strongly scented, deep-pink *Rosa* 'Louise Odier'.

> When I relaxed and listened to what the garden wanted, it responded with amazing new generosity, and such beauty that sometimes I'd catch myself, hardly able to believe my good fortune at living here

Charlie collecting flowers with her cocker spaniels Maddie and Minnie, who could often be found curled up fast asleep among the clumps of iris.



Above The orchard trees have generous skirts of long grass with wildflowers.

Right Wild grasses add to diversity without becoming dominant if mown twice a year.

Below In the space of a decade, the common spotted orchid count went from a couple of dozen to hundreds.

▷ roses that liked heavier soil. Some overbred forms didn't much care for it, and the garden didn't much care for them either.

When the pandemic struck, and event work stopped, I kept some mail-order going, but otherwise stopped cutting blooms and allowed myself to observe the gardens. I noticed that many weeds found a useful role as living mulches; how grasses around shrubs funnelled moisture downwards and stopped heavier ground from cracking. Not everything flourished – shallow-rooted astrantias and geums vanished under an onslaught of buttercups and enchanters nightshade, and ground elder tangled into the roots of phlox, but it was lack of regular deadheading rather than minimal weeding that hampered continuous blooming.

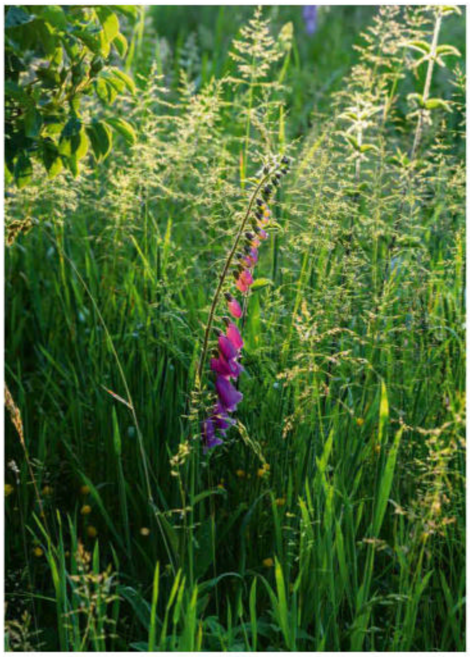
The pandemic also pushed me back to writing and other work, and a renewed focus on making the garden more sustainable. I had already stopped regular mowing, and sowed yellow rattle beneath the orchard trees. The first year, the long grass was so thick it was a hideous job cutting it back in August after the rattle had seeded, but within three years, orchids, vetches and other wildflowers moved into the lighter grass, which is easily cut with a domestic mower. Grass under the oak and lime trees got colonised by snowdrops, crocuses, narcissi, wood anemones, bluebells and orchids, edged by camassia and nectaroscordum. I would mow once in earliest spring and then not until late autumn.

As I changed my style and focus, most cutting roses and perennials from my cutting field went to new homes, leaving old shrub roses *Rosa* 'Fantin-Latour' and *R.* 'Madame Hardy'. These looked magical blooming above native grasses, drifts of quaking grass *Briza maxima*, feathery smooth meadow grass *Poa pratensis* and spires of sweet vernal *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. Waves of creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, crested dog's tail ▷

Above *Thalictrum flavum* subsp. *glaucum* towers above *Rosa* Queen of Sweden (= 'Austiger') and an unknown old yellow rose.

Left Quaking grass *Briza maxima* spreads vigorously.

Below Foxgloves grow among mixed grasses on the edge of the field.



Twenty years of growing flowers for cutting was an adventure, but my garden and work quietly moved into a different phase – still flower-filled, but wilder and less demanding

▷ *Cynosurus cristatus* and others mingled with shallow-rooting sisyrinchiums and foxgloves to glorious effect.

You can't just stop weeding and expect everything to thrive, but few shrubs object, and deep-rooted perennials don't care unless weeds form an impenetrable mat and prevent air or water from circulating. I stopped favourites being overwhelmed by brambles, goosegrass or bindweed; fussier subjects departed.

I ensured there was a glorious variety of flowering plants from early bulbs until winter witch hazel. Favourites included clouds of libertia, drifts of *Iris sibirica*, the surreal curly spikes of *Veronicastrum*, and deep indigo-blue *Baptisia*. Wandering foxgloves, poppies and verbascum were joyous; clematis covered arches and clambered through roses.

I shared the gardens with voles, shrews and weasels, toads, grass snakes and hedgehogs, and an occasional deer. The air filled with birdsong, and I took time to listen. Twenty years of growing flowers for cutting had been a fascinating adventure, but then my garden and my work quietly moved into a different phase – still flower-filled but wilder and less demanding.

I spent two years planning a writing school to combine with my own writing when I stopped growing cut flowers. I had wonderful tutors lined up and a healthy amount of interest. It was planned as the ideal project to futureproof living in this lovely place. Then, I developed an unexpected eye problem. For more than six months, I could not drive. I could scarcely make out letters, and I found facial recognition awkward. Not great qualities for hosting a writing school with no public transport or shops nearby. Things are improving slowly, but may never be right.

So now, I am leaving here, and I feel it's okay to leave. This was not my plan, but every garden has stories and I suppose this is just the next episode. This garden has been very big hearted. It allowed me to push and pull it into various directions to grow flowers for cutting – not something this heavy non-draining soil had probably dreamed of. And, when I relaxed and listened to what the garden wanted, it responded with amazing new generosity and such beauty that sometimes I'd catch myself, hardly able to believe my good fortune at living here. I love this place.

I have faith that the new custodian, designer Joe Swift, will keep the gardens partly wild but inevitably sharpen up bits and smarten up my rather relaxed house. I hope he and his family will be happy here for a long, long time. As for me, I am going to take on a project, which I hope will make my recent frustration fade. It's tiny in comparison – only a quarter of an acre below a currently tatty house – but with a stunningly beautiful view. Already I am dreaming of a flock of cornus, swarms of iris and libertia, lots of grasses, clambering clematis and wild favourites.

I will always be a gardener, and I hope the new place will welcome me as readily. I hope I will be writing more soon, and I have started giving advice on creating and maintaining wilder areas. So the future looks intriguing… just rather unexpected. ☐

GI Follow the journey of Charlie's Dorset garden with new owner Joe Swift on his YouTube channel, Joe's Country Garden. @joescountrygarden

Charlie's tips for easier gardening

- **Listen to your garden.** If something needs constant attention, it probably doesn't want to be there.
- **There are no rules that work for every garden or gardener.** If something doesn't work for you, don't struggle, but consider change. For example, no-dig beds are generally excellent for low-maintenance productive veg growing, but If you're on really heavy clay, you may be better growing conventionally. Or consider building Hugel beds from mounds of rotting wood and decaying matter, covered with compost.
- **Work with your garden's rhythms but don't fuss.** Clear excess debris from beds in spring and fork over lightly to allow plants air and light. Allow weeds and fallen plant matter to act as protective companion cover crops over summer. Break up dense mats and check and mulch beds with garden compost and leaf mould for winter warmth and protection.
- **If buttercups, ground elder and other creeping shallow-rooted plants** colonise your beds, plant deep-rooting shrubs and perennials – they may even benefit from the channels the creeping plants create for air and water. Docks and deep rooters including thistles and dandelions, on the other hand, won't much bother shallow-rooting plants, but try and dig the worst of them out in spring as they can spread fast through grassy areas.
- **Invest in a long-grass mower** – or autumn help – if you want areas of grass studded with bulbs and wildflowers. You need to remove all grass clippings and fallen leaves from wild grassy areas in autumn and this can be demanding, particularly in a wet year.

Intelligent garden care
Cable-free

FREE Connectivity

AGS | Active Guidance System
A 10000
A 7500
A 5000
A 3000

ePower
A 1500
A 750

STIGA autonomous robot mowers

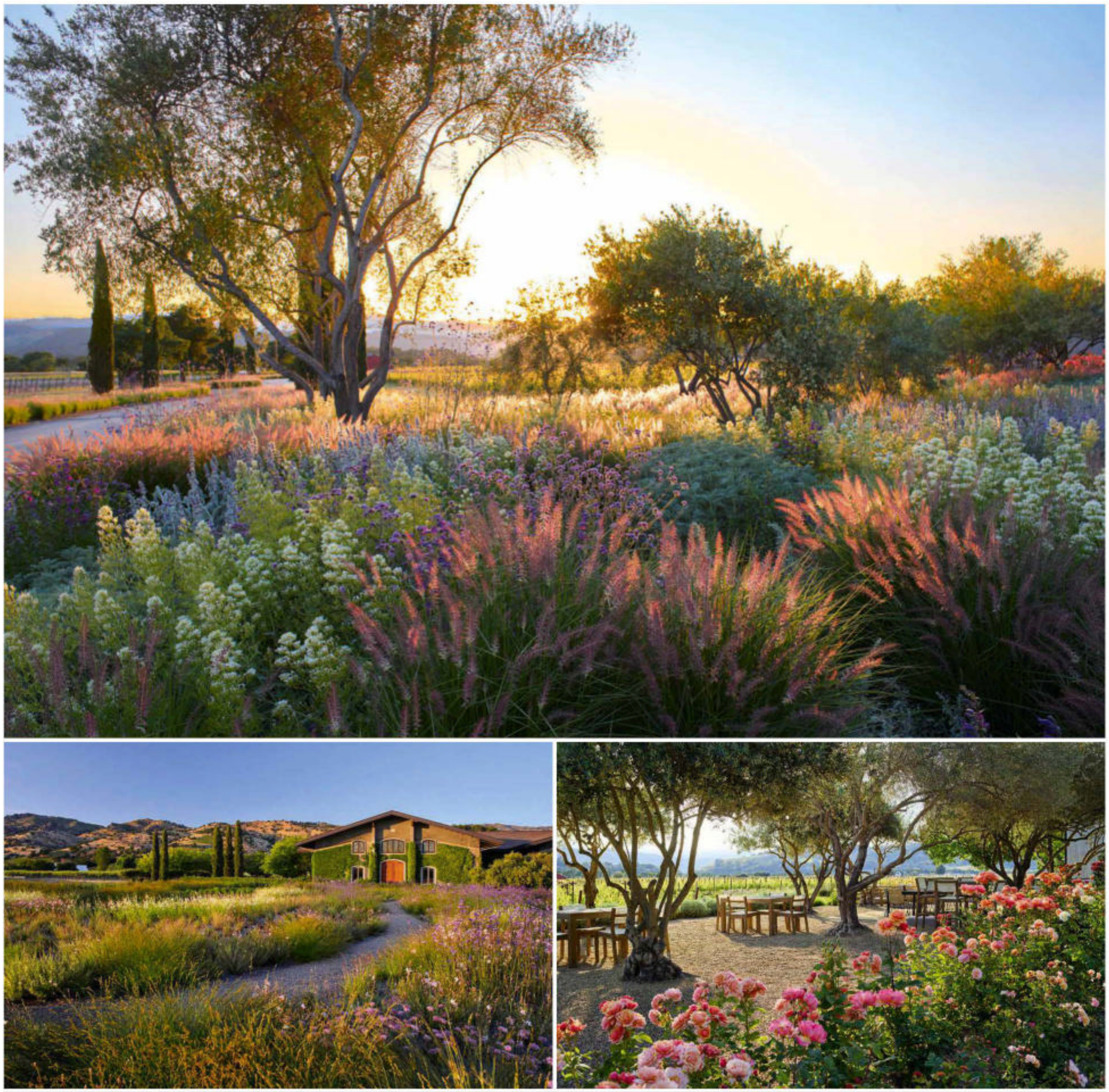
New extended range for lawns up to 10,000 m². Virtual installation . Intelligent and efficient cutting sessions, guided by AGS technology

STIGA
stiga.co.uk

CASH BACK
UP to £500*

Design

News, garden design insight and sourcebook



California dreaming

Landscape architecture and urban design firm Surfacedesign has redesigned the visitor experience at the Clos du Val vineyards in Napa, California. The gardens, surrounding the tasting rooms and winery needed a revamp that would reinforce the importance of the surrounding land and tie the gardens to the more contemporary wine-making building that was constructed on site in 2017. The rose gardens flanking the winery have been expanded with a palette of pink, coral, salmon and apricot and a path wandering towards the vineyard now passes through a meadow of tall grasses and flowers, offering views towards the mountains. The space is filled with perennials and is designed with spring through to late summer in mind, when something will always be in flower. **sdisf.com**

WORDS MOLLY BLAIR, PHOTOGRAPHS MARION BRENNER

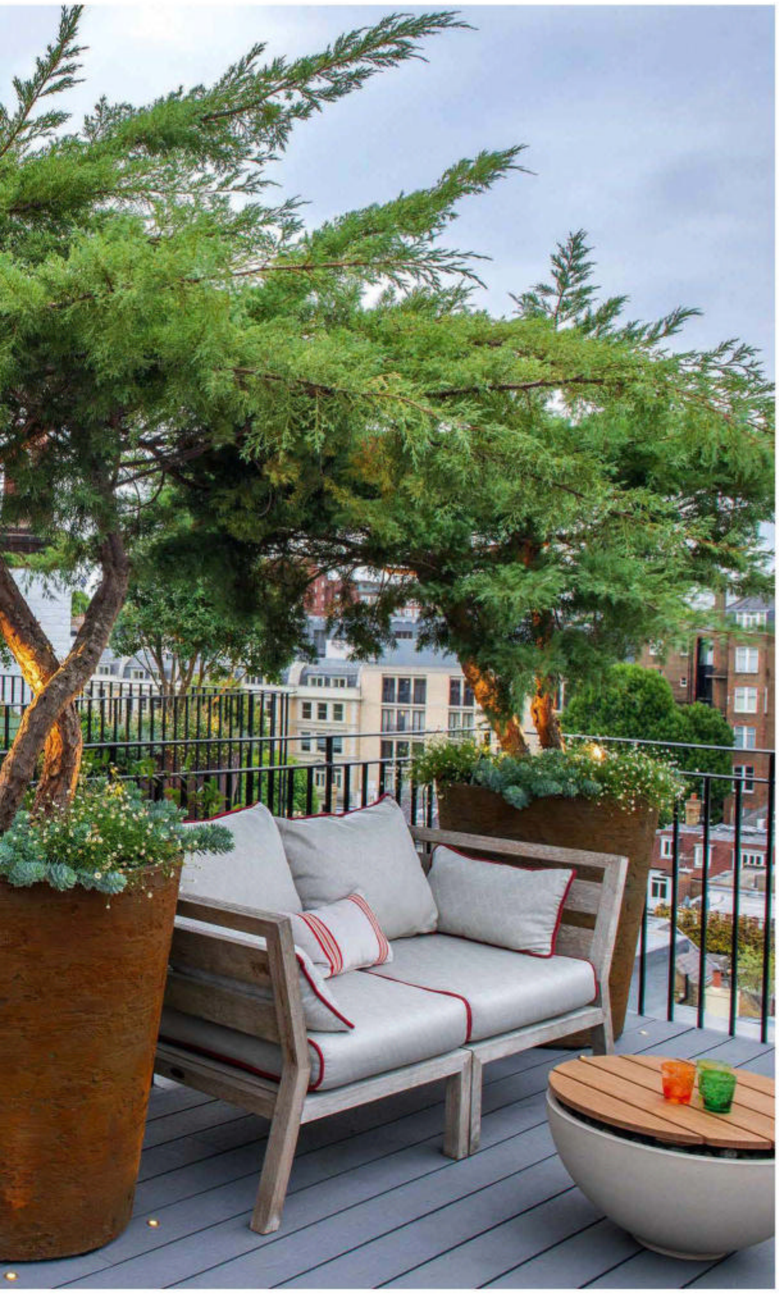
FLIGHTS OF FANCY

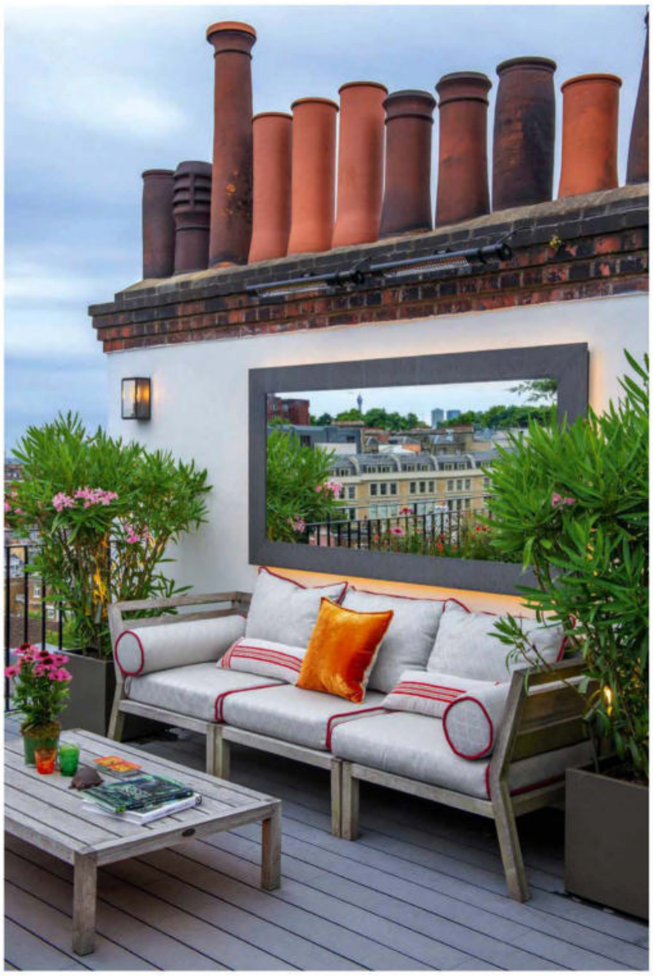
Designer Maïtanne Hunt had her mettle tested when she built this dramatic roof terrace, seven storeys up – with no lift – in Kensington, west London

WORDS **NATASHA GOODFELLOW**
PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**

The brief

Roof terraces are always a challenge but this one, seven floors up with no lift, in the narrow streets of Kensington, west London, was trickier than most. Originally two separate terraces, they had been combined some years ago via an awkward connecting passageway around a void, which takes the eye towards street level in a vertiginous plunge. "But the views out across London are fantastic," says garden designer Maïtanne Hunt, "and my clients – a couple with adult children – wanted to use this as a space to entertain." Since they regularly host up to 50 guests, space for circulation was key, as was lighting; and decking planks with spacing too narrow for stiletto heels to get caught in (a common problem with the previous ipe boards). The client was also keen to retain her existing furniture and to incorporate some oleanders (*Nerium oleander*) to remind her of her childhood in the South of France.





Left Two sculptural juniper trees form the focal point of this roof terrace. Combined with evergreen planting including multi-stemmed *Osmanthus* x *burkwoodii* and *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, they create a lush, welcoming space, despite the exposed site.

Above Mirrors, framed in wood a similar colour to that of the decking, are used almost as 'living picture frames' giving novel perspectives on the planting and the streetscapes beyond.

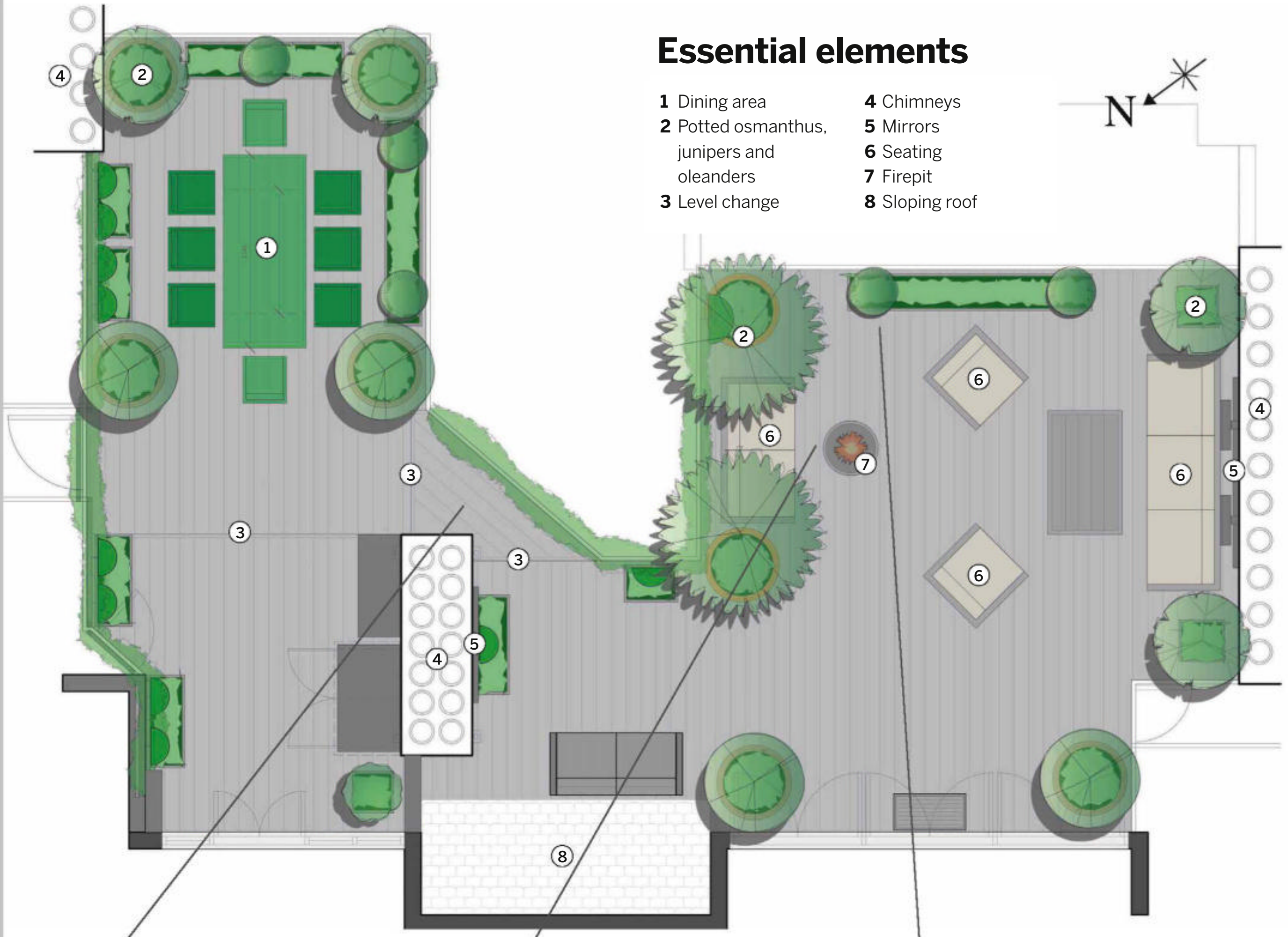
The design

Two beautiful multi-stemmed junipers (*Juniperus* x *pfitzeriana* 'Hetzii') are the anchor points for the design, and the inspiration from which everything else flows. "The clients have a lot of contemporary art in their apartment and I knew that these trees, with their twisting trunks, would make a similar statement on the terrace," says Maïtanne. A focal point from inside, they also help detract attention from the void, and anchor the main 'drawing room' area, shading a small sofa. This faces another seating area, where a cleverly placed mirror allows guests to observe the trees as they relax: 'It's almost like a moving painting," says Maïtanne. The other side of the space has been delineated as a dining area with a table and chairs nestled among potted *Osmanthus* x *burkwoodii*.

The other salient feature of the space is the terracotta chimney pots, "so many I was immediately put in mind of *Mary Poppins*," says Maïtanne. She used their textures and colours as her cue for the pots and the flashes of colour in the planting, which features vibrant *Geum* 'Mrs J Bradshaw' and plummy *Verbascum* 'Petra'.

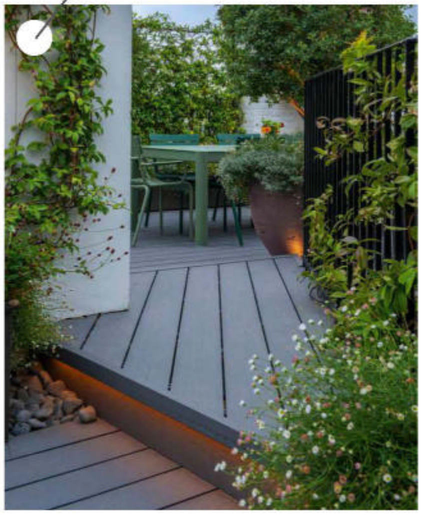
The apparently simple design belies the huge amount of planning, logistics and project management work that went into it. A structural engineer was needed to work out the load-bearings. The subframe beneath the original ipe boards was rotten, and once this was removed, the roof was also found to be in poor condition and needed repairs before work could begin. With no lift, and the streets too narrow to allow a crane, Maïtanne had to erect a scaffolding tower to bring up a hoist with which to winch materials up to site. Throughout, the building's management company, caretaker and all neighbours had to be kept posted on progress – and Maïtanne found herself on site, climbing all those stairs, almost every day.

Turn the page for more roof garden solutions ▷



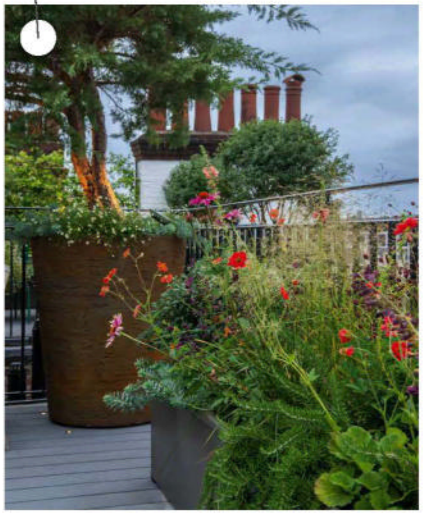
Essential elements

1 Dining area
2 Potted osmanthus, junipers and oleanders
3 Level change
4 Chimneys
5 Mirrors
6 Seating
7 Firepit
8 Sloping roof

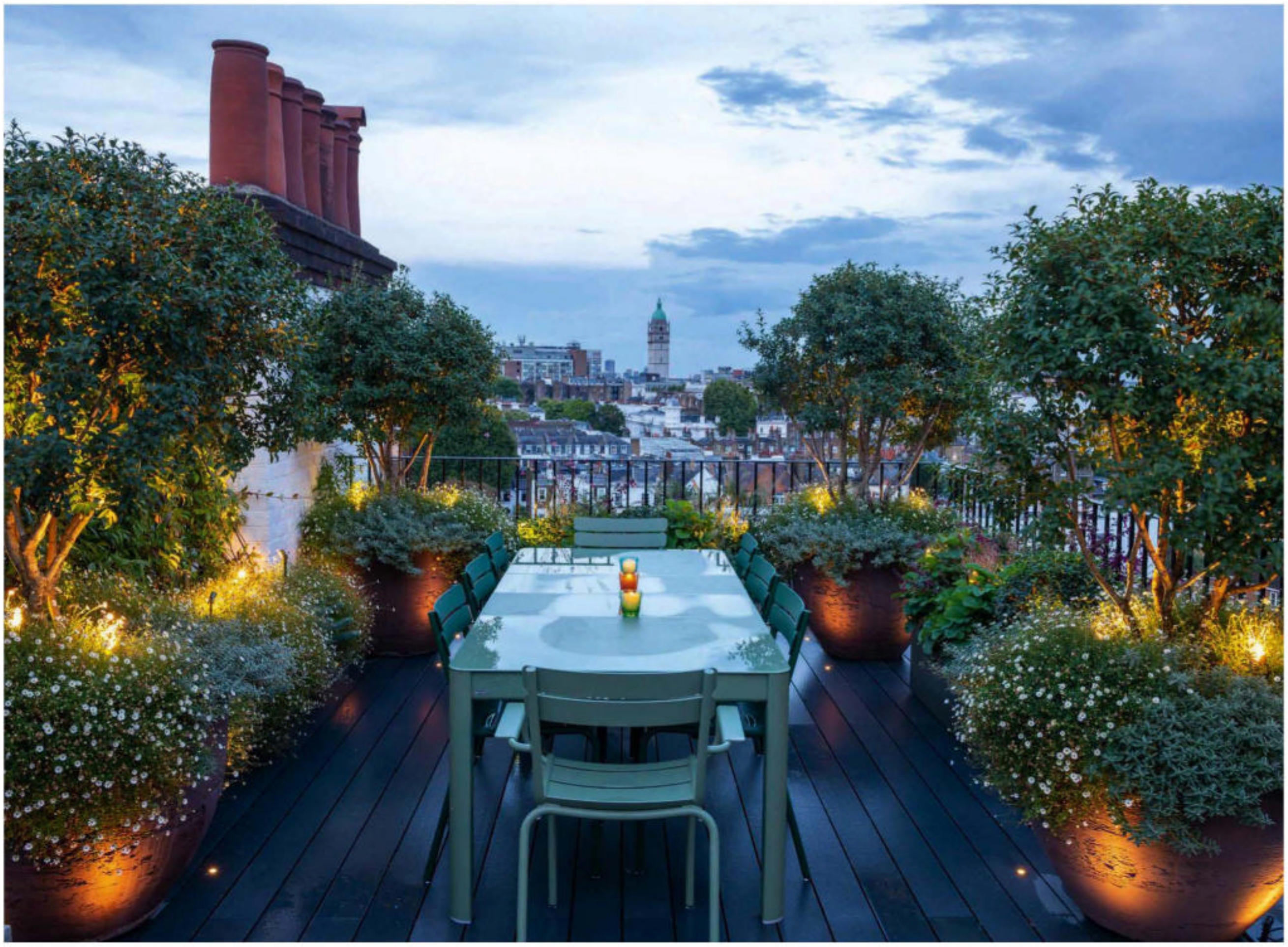


DECKING DECISION
For the decking, Maïtanne has used EnviroBuild composite Pioneer boards, which are composed of around 90 per cent recycled materials, have a lower carbon footprint than timber, and are splinter-free and fade-resistant. The narrow shadow gaps avoid trapped high heels, while the dark Stone hue is a good foil to the brick and soaks up some of the sun's rays.

REVAMPED SEATING
This inviting seating area under the junipers features a pre-existing sofa, which was repaired and finished with new upholstery to complement the terrace's design. The cushions are rain-resistant and are covered in outdoor fabrics from Pierre Frey, JAB and Samuel & Sons. The sculptural Hemi firebowl (which has a lid so it can double as a coffee table) is from Solus Decor.



PERFECT PLANTERS
Since this is a roof terrace, all planting is in planters. Maïtanne used a mix of pre-existing water troughs, which she had cleaned and resprayed with RAL 7013 ("A brownish, grey-green colour that blends well with plants," says Maïtanne), and new planters from Torc Pots. The junipers sit in tall, narrow Kyna pots, while the osmanthus are in its more rounded Kari design.



The dining area

More intimate than the drawing room terrace, the dining terrace is a calm, green haven surrounded by shrubs of *Osmanthus* x *burkwoodii* large enough to make the space feel enclosed, but airy enough – thanks to their multi-stemmed form – not to block the views. A large area of *Trachelospermum jasminoides* covers some of the party wall, adding to the sense of enclosure. The contemporary aluminium furniture is by French company Fermob ("It'll last 25 years without you having to lift a finger," says Maïtanne), which comes in a huge range of colours. Here, Maïtanne has chosen two different shades of green – one selected to complement that of the cupola beyond – to keep the restful feel while also injecting an extra dash of interest.

The lighting

As this was destined to be a space for entertaining, getting the lighting right was always going to be crucial. To do this, Maïtanne worked with lighting designers John Cullen who devised a sophisticated, subtle scheme that adds atmosphere and drama to the space. "The trees and the step between the seating and dining area are lit," says Maïtanne, "but so are other, more unexpected elements such as the pots themselves (highlighting their beautiful texture), the coffee table, which is lit from underneath, and the mirrors, which are backlit." Since all the cabling lies beneath the decking, and the uplighters for the pots are inserted into the boards, the positioning had to be absolutely exact from the outset.

The planting

The main planting challenge was how safely to accommodate the two juniper trees on the edge of the terrace. "They have a beautifully wide canopy, which is lovely for shade, but can also act like a sail," explains Maïtanne, "so I worked with the structural engineer to devise a way to anchor the pots through the decking and to the subframe beneath. They're not going to move a millimetre."

Chosen for their drought- and wind-tolerance and their blue-grey foliage, the junipers combine with the other evergreen plants to create a lush, verdant scene that invites the owners outdoors, even on the hottest day. This is helped by exuberant underplanting: a frothy mix of glaucous-leaved *Euphorbia myrsinites*, *Helianthemum* 'Wisley Pink' and *Erigeron karvinskianus*, as well as feature planters incorporating prairie plants and grasses, including *Echinacea purpurea, Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln' and *Sanguisorba* 'Tanna'. These cope well with the harsh conditions of a roof terrace. The grasses, in particular, add movement to the space.

Trachelospermum jasminoides is trained up walls and along the railings (again, to disguise the view of the void below) and, with the osmanthus, also contributes another important aspect to this garden: scent. "As you move through to the dining area when one of the two is in flower, the perfume just washes over you like a wave," says Maïtanne.

USEFUL INFORMATION
Find out more about Maïtanne Hunt Gardens & Landscapes at **maitannehunt.com**

GARDEN TOURS

FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS

Kirker's programme of Cultural Tours has been carefully designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests, including art, music, wine and gardens. Each holiday is led by an expert lecturer who will help reveal insights which you might otherwise miss and includes visits to exceptional houses and gardens in unique settings around the UK and Europe, including access to private gardens not normally open to the public.

GLORIOUS GARDENS OF THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

A FIVE NIGHT HOLIDAY | 17 JUNE

Despite its northerly latitude, the Highlands of Scotland, warmed by the effects of the Gulf Stream and cultivated by some are the country's most skilled and passionate horticulturalists, is home to a surprising diversity of gardens. In the company of local expert Paddy Scott, we will visit a number of private gardens, some of which are rarely open to the public, and enjoy guided tours with the owners and gardeners themselves.

Dunrobin Castle

Price from £2,896 (single supp. £350) including five dinners and four lunches

GARDENS OF THE RIVIERA

A FIVE NIGHT HOLIDAY | 10 OCTOBER

There are many great gardens dotted along the Côte d'Azur between St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat and the border with Italy. Along with the artists, many gardeners were drawn to the Riviera, attracted by both its climate and its beauty. The legacy of these 19th century gardeners still survives, giving inspiration to today's visitors. Simon Monckton, who lived for many years on the Riviera, leads the tour, which will include Hanbury Gardens, Val Rahmeh and the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild.

Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild

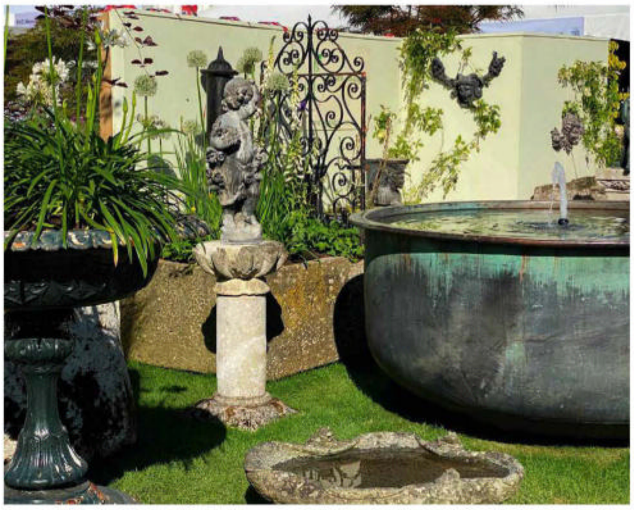
Price from £1,998 (single supp. £320) including return flights, three dinners and three lunches

Prices are per person based on two sharing and include accommodation with breakfast, and the services of the Kirker tour leader.

Speak to an expert:
020 7593 2284
kirkerholidays.com

ABTA
ABTA No.V6595

Kirker
FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS



J S Garden Antiques
Pots & Ornaments

www.jsgardens.co.uk
01905 381679 / 07930 576881

National Trust

Overbeck's Garden

Overbeck's Garden is a hidden paradise packed with sub-tropical and exotic plants. Lose yourself along narrow paths that wind through palms, ferns, Mediterranean terraces and oriental-inspired planting. Why not climb to the top of the olive grove to soak up the stunning coastal views?

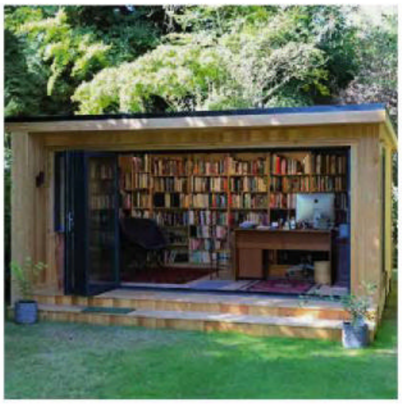
nationaltrust.org.uk/overbecks-garden

©National Trust 2024. Registered charity no. 205846.
©National Trust Images/Chris Lacey.

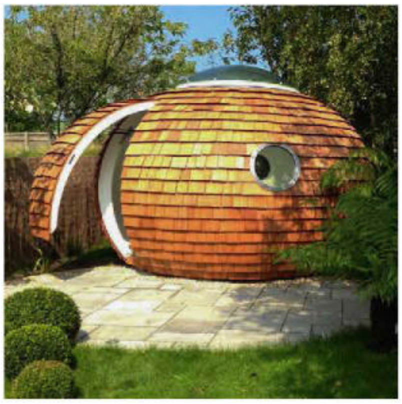
Garden rooms

Add some glamour to your garden with these pods, huts, offices and studios

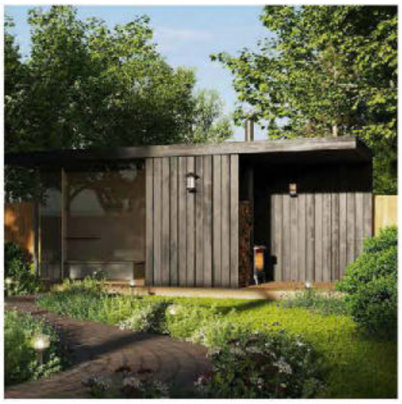
COMPILED BY MOLLY BLAIR



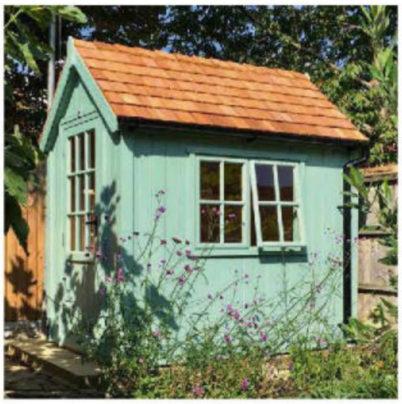
SCANDI STYLE
Nordic Room,
From £18,000, Nordic Room,
01932 343228, nordicroom.co.uk



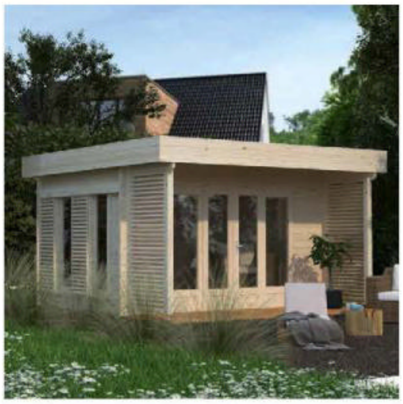
OUTER SPACE
The FatPod,
From £19,000+VAT, Archipod,
07512 307896, archipod.co.uk



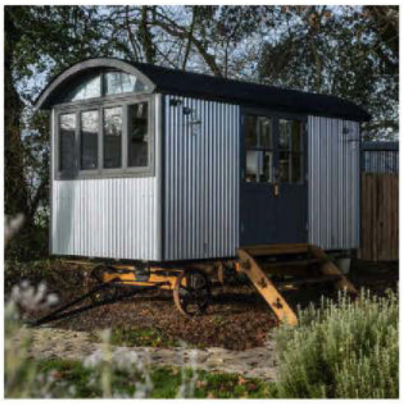
BLENDING IN
The Crofter,
From £25,682, James Gray,
020 3925 0343, jgray.co.uk



COTTAGE GARDEN
The Classic,
From £2,695, The Cosy Shed Co,
01623 861364, thecosyshedco.co.uk

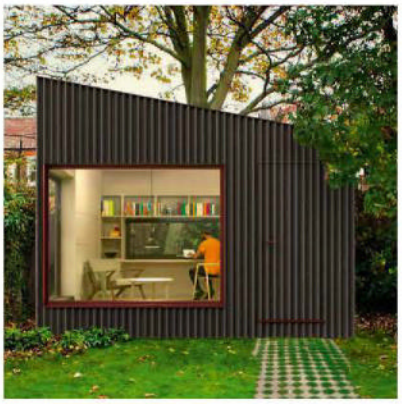


MODERN
Caroline Summer House,
From £5,375, GardenLife,
0131 660 6333, gardenlifelogcabins.co.uk

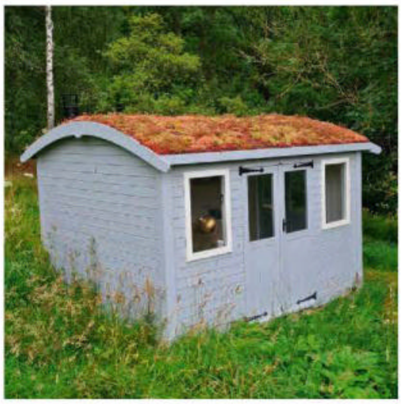


MATT SWEETING PHOTOGRAPHY

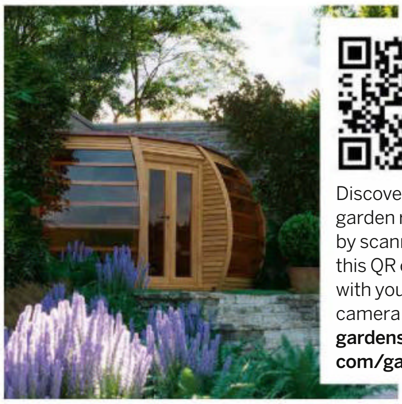
ROOM TO CREATE
Meridian Workspace Hut,
From £26,000, Blackdown Shepherd's
Huts, blackdownshepherdhuts.co.uk



COMPACT DESIGN
Ecospace BASE,
From £29,950+VAT, Ecospace,
020 7703 4004, ecospacestudios.com

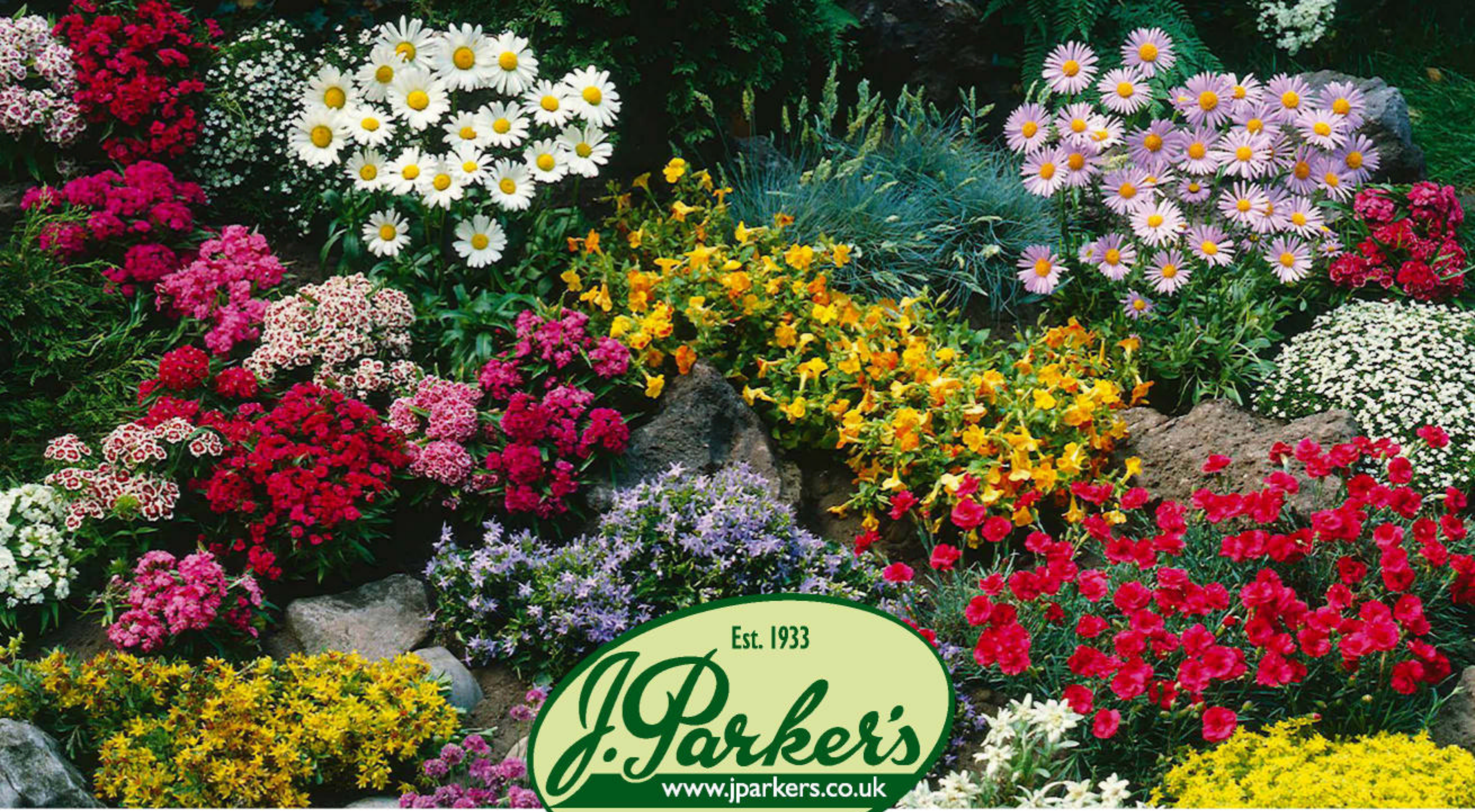


GREEN ROOF
Shepherd's Hut Studios,
£2548.80, Appletree,
01953 850072, appletreebespoke.co.uk



VERSATILE
Huuden Crown Compact Garden House,
£12,847, Outdoor Iconic,
07480 067408, outdooriconic.com

Discover more garden rooms by scanning this QR code with your phone camera, or visit **gardensillustrated.com/gardenrooms**



Est. 1933

J.Parker's

www.jparkers.co.uk

Grow Your Garden for Less with J. Parker's

"As a family-run business, now stretching over three generations of the Duiker-Parker family, our commitment to providing quality and value is as strong as ever."

Paul Duiker-Parker *Managing Director*

Save 15% online now. Enter code **JPG0424** at checkout.*

To find savings across 1000's of products online visit:

www.jparkers.co.uk

Keep up to date *@jparkersbulbs*

REVIEWS.io ★★★★★

Product varieties featured in imagery are: Perennial Ground Cover Collection (KP862), Alcea Chaters Double Mixed (KP2582/ KP2583), Rose Stromboli (R506/R507) and Busy Lizzie (Impatiens) Beacon (Maxi Plugs) (MH138/MH139/MH257). *Voucher code valid until 31/05/24.

JASON INGRAM

Flood-proof plants

As our weather becomes wetter and wilder, flooding and waterlogging are becoming more frequent, so what should you plant to cope with a changing climate?

WORDS **NAOMI SLADE**

Watching the weather is par for the course for many gardeners, but with climate change, and extreme weather events becoming more frequent, we are all feeling the impact. Recent reports suggest that we have just experienced the wettest winter in 130 years, and with flood warnings widespread, the way in which we garden will need to change.

Most plants will tolerate a brief, one-off immersion, where the water quickly drains away, but ground that is boggy over long periods is a completely different situation. The season and the impact on dormant plants or those that are actively growing will also differ, as where water replaces air in the soil, roots are unable to breathe and they will rot and drown.

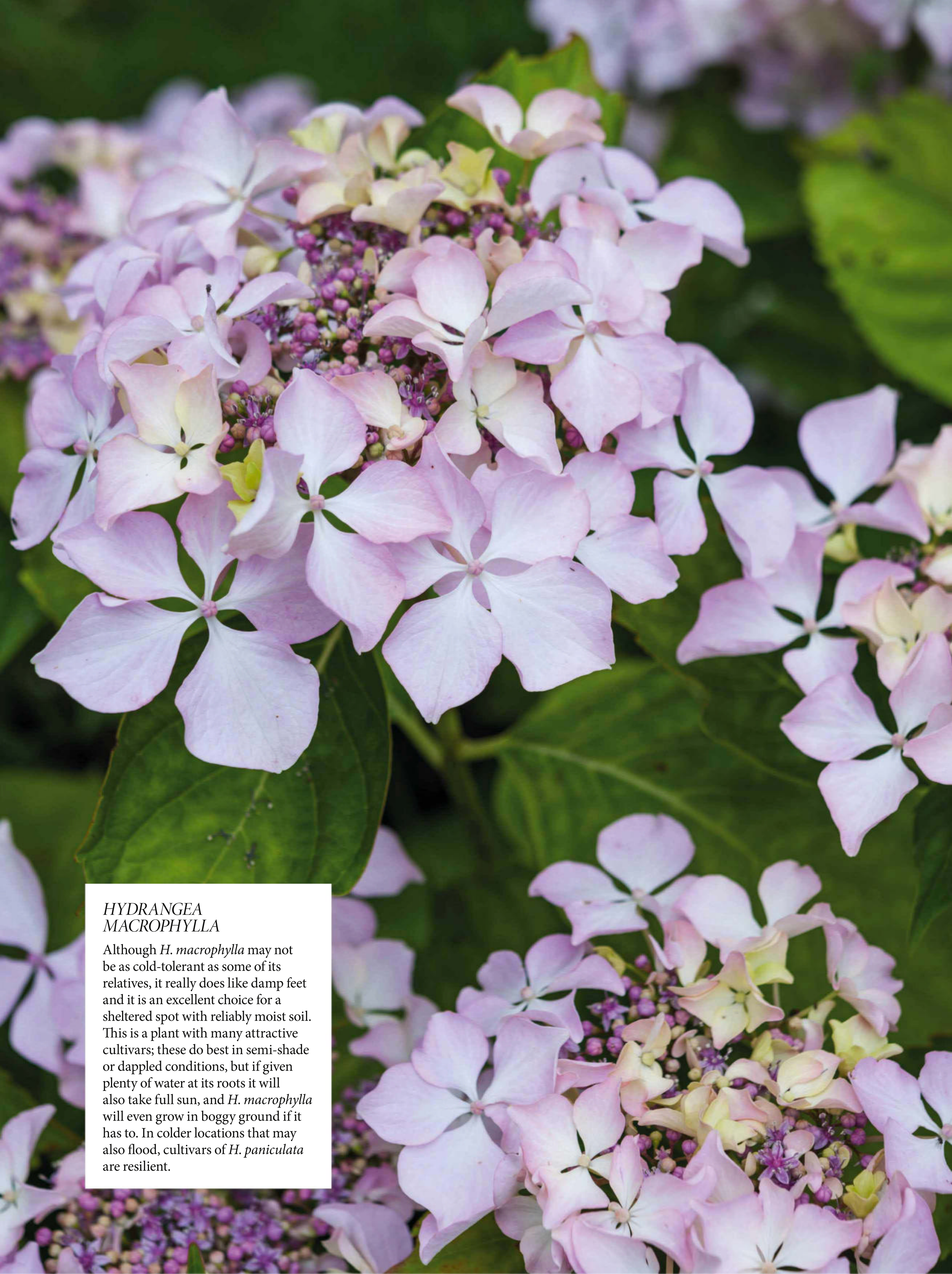
Gardens now need to be planned in such a way that they will accommodate excess water. Choosing plants that better suit the conditions is a good start; *Betula nigra*, *Sambucus nigra* cultivars and *Pinus sylvestris* are tolerant of moisture, for example, while *Amelanchier* (shown), *Liquidambar* and *Taxodium distichum* – the swamp cypress – actively prefer it.

In naturally boggy places or where groundwater is high, meanwhile, it may be best to accept the status quo, perhaps putting in a pond or rain garden, rather than installing drainage, which may not be effective.

While no single action will solve the problem, we can all play our part in helping to future-proof our gardens, and rethink our approach.

Water is increasingly becoming an issue, and for gardens that will thrive and survive, it makes sense to harness and embrace it, capturing the rain, putting it to use, and planting appropriately to create beautiful spaces to enjoy. ▷

Turn the page to discover top flood-resilient plants



HYDRANGEA MACROPHYLLA

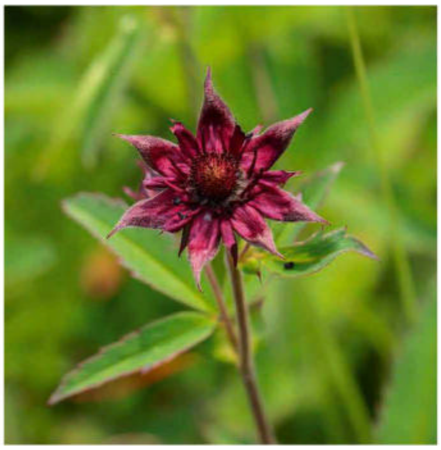
Although *H. macrophylla* may not be as cold-tolerant as some of its relatives, it really does like damp feet and it is an excellent choice for a sheltered spot with reliably moist soil. This is a plant with many attractive cultivars; these do best in semi-shade or dappled conditions, but if given plenty of water at its roots it will also take full sun, and *H. macrophylla* will even grow in boggy ground if it has to. In colder locations that may also flood, cultivars of *H. paniculata* are resilient.

GEUM RIVALE

Native to the British Isles, *Geum rivale*, or water avens, is a spreading rhizomatous plant, characterised by drooping orangey flowers with a contrasting calyx. Thriving in damp and shady areas, it can creep into part-sun, but the brighter it is, the more moisture is required, and in a sunny garden it is best planted under a protective shrub or overhanging tree. While the species is attractive in itself, a number of named cultivars exist, such as *Geum rivale* 'Leonard's Variety' (shown), which is a dusty, bronze-rose colour.

ACORUS GRAMINEUS 'ŌGON'

Evergreen grasses generally respond better to flooding than their showier deciduous counterparts. Where conditions are variable, this grass-like sweet flag borders on bombproof. Evergreen or semi-evergreen, depending on location, its variegated golden-yellow leaves are ideal for brightening up a dark corner, and the plant is happy in shallow water and bog, as well as in drier conditions. On heavy ground or where water availability is unpredictable, this plant is an asset, and it can be considered for areas that collect water during protracted rain, or where a stream appears after a downpour.



POTENTILLA PALUSTRIS

With attractive divided leaves and starry wine-coloured flowers, this British native bears a clear resemblance to the more widely grown herbaceous and shrubby cinquefoils, to which it is related. Adapted to grow in marshland, it can be used alongside ponds and streams, and in areas of ephemeral flooding, in the same way as can plants such as *Caltha palustris*, *Geum rivale* and *Astilbe*.

In boggy conditions, plant in sun, but in a drier spot some shade may be beneficial; the soil doesn't need to be permanently wet, but it shouldn't dry out completely. Should the garden flood, it will take it in its stride.

FERNS

Ferns are often the first choice for damp and shady places, and may also be tolerant of much drier conditions, making them a versatile subject. Evergreen ferns, such as *Asplenium scolopendrium*, are particularly effective, surviving quite happily in places that run with water in winter, and bouncing back after periods of drought too; while *Cyrtomium fortunei* is a more structural evergreen for a damp and sheltered spot. Handsome *Osmunda regalis* (shown) can be planted on dry land or in shallow water in full sun, and *Dyropteris* species are happy with water and dry shade, once established.

JASON INGRAM; BOTANY VISION, AVALON.RED, IVANTA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

SALIX ALBA VAR. *VITELLINA* 'BRITZENSIS'

Willow trees are often found growing naturally near water, so this is a logical group of plants to consider in flood-prone plots. They do vary, however, with some species becoming untidy and sprawling, and even elegant weeping willows can become large over time. With an added helping of bright winter-stem colour, *Salix alba* var. *vitellina* 'Britzensis' is more compact than most, and pollarding or coppicing can keep it more manageable, while still providing a 'proper' tree that can establish and make a good, resilient root system.

CALTHA PALUSTRIS

With lush, dark-green leaves and cheerful, glossy, golden flowers in April, marsh marigolds or kingcups growing wild in woodlands and by stream edges are often viewed solely as pond marginals, revelling in thoroughly soggy winter and spring conditions and accustomed to the rise and fall of seasonal freshwater inundation. The drier ground of summer does not usually trouble them too much either. Look out for the double-flowered *C. palustris* 'Plena' or white-flowered *C. palustris* var. *alba*, while related *Caltha polypetala* is a later-flowering alternative.

CAREX

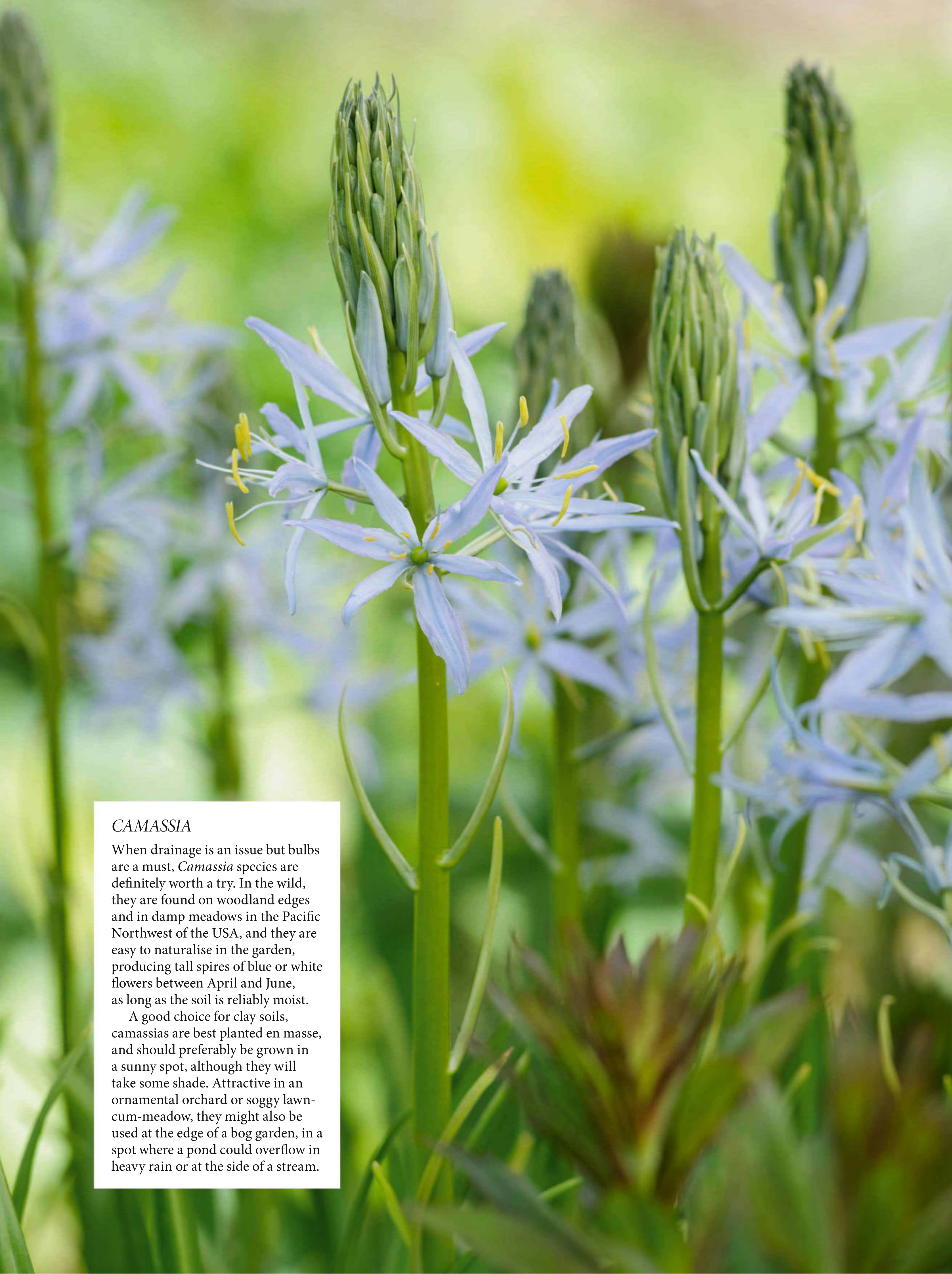
When creating flood-resilient landscapes, sedges are often used for their ability to survive cyclical inundation and even total immersion, while the dense stems will slow the flow of water, and give it longer to drain away. *Carex* species make an attractive alternative to grasses in areas that are wet, or suffer the effects of localised runoff. *C. grayi* forms an upright clump with dark-green leaves and ornamental seedheads. The popular series of variegated plants, such as *C. oshimensis* 'Everest' (shown), prefer well-drained soil, but the occasional inundation or period of heavy rain won't finish them off.

ISOLEPIS CERNUA

With its slender green stems tipped with silver-white flowers in summer, this evergreen perennial in the sedge family is aptly known as the fibre-optic plant.

Usually sold (often under its previous name of *Scirpus cernuus*) as a pond marginal, it is a really flexible subject, making a good garden plant in moister soils or actively boggy ground, and fairly robust in the face of more comprehensive flooding events – just don't let it dry out completely. For the purposes of garden design, it is an asset in the winter garden where it will lend a welcome splash of fresh green.

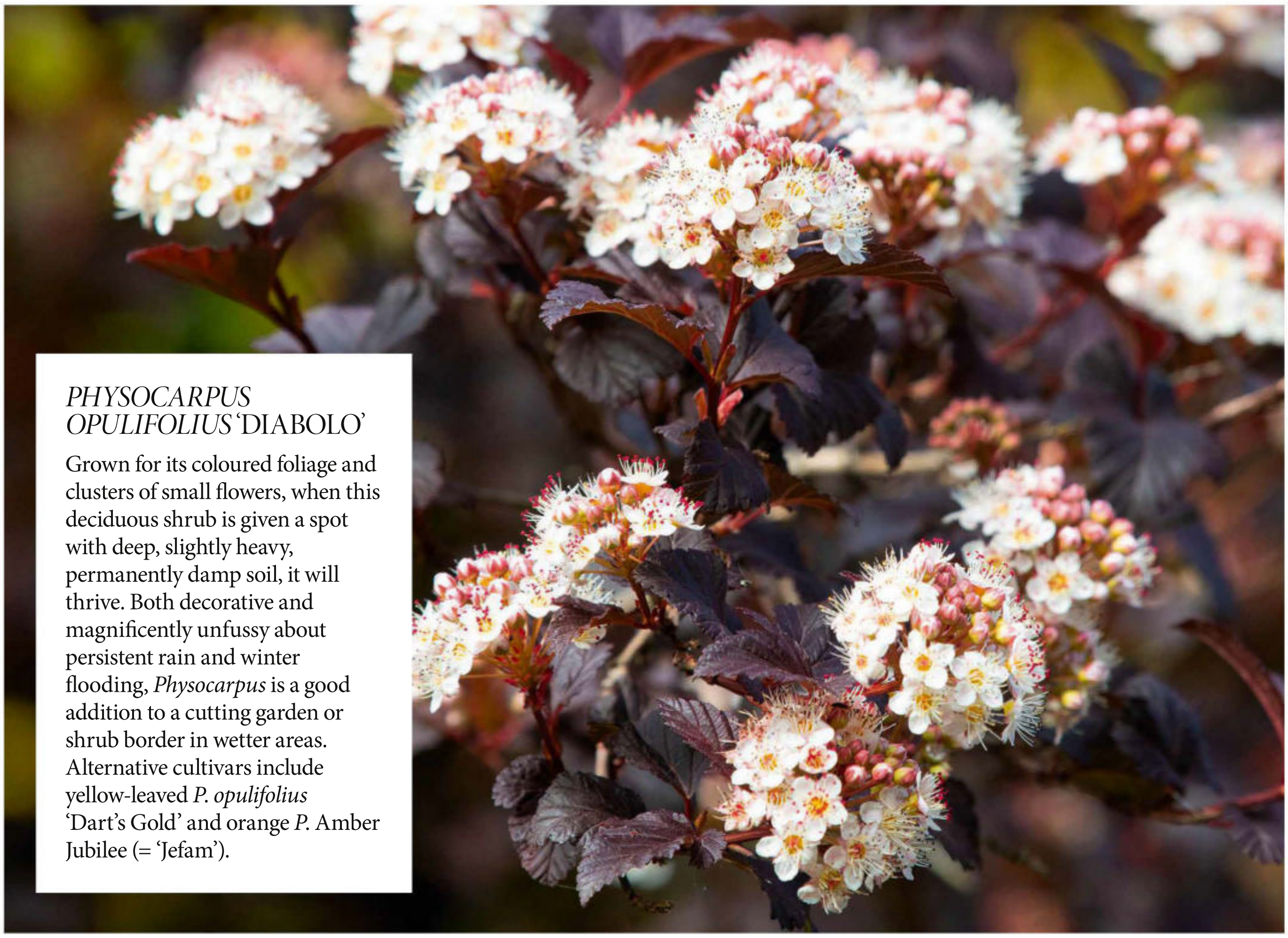
JASON INGRAM, NATURE PICTURE LIBRARY, ORGANICA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



CAMASSIA

When drainage is an issue but bulbs are a must, *Camassia* species are definitely worth a try. In the wild, they are found on woodland edges and in damp meadows in the Pacific Northwest of the USA, and they are easy to naturalise in the garden, producing tall spires of blue or white flowers between April and June, as long as the soil is reliably moist.

A good choice for clay soils, camassias are best planted en masse, and should preferably be grown in a sunny spot, although they will take some shade. Attractive in an ornamental orchard or soggy lawn-cum-meadow, they might also be used at the edge of a bog garden, in a spot where a pond could overflow in heavy rain or at the side of a stream.



PHYSOCARPUS OPULIFOLIUS 'DIABOLO'

Grown for its coloured foliage and clusters of small flowers, when this deciduous shrub is given a spot with deep, slightly heavy, permanently damp soil, it will thrive. Both decorative and magnificently unfussy about persistent rain and winter flooding, *Physocarpus* is a good addition to a cutting garden or shrub border in wetter areas. Alternative cultivars include yellow-leaved *P. opulifolius* 'Dart's Gold' and orange *P.* Amber Jubilee (= 'Jefam').

LILIUM PARDALINUM

While bulbs in general can resent too much water, these lilies, known as panther or leopard lilies, originate in the damp woodlands of the Pacific Coast of North America, from Oregon to Mexico, and so are used to both moisture and seasonal flooding.

The plant is vigorous and over time it will produce substantial clumps of rhizomatous bulbs; in summer the erect stems are topped with highly reflexed Turk's cap flowers in an arresting shade of tangerine. *Lilium pardalinum* will also grow in drier soil, but the plants will be shorter.

LOBELIA CARDINALIS

A prime candidate for an intermittently soggy location, the tall and erect *Lobelia cardinalis* or cardinal flower is a bit of a dream. A hardy herbaceous perennial with green-bronze leaves, its showy, bright-red flowers are produced in summer and autumn, on stems around 1m tall, arising from a basal rosette. Where there is rich and moisture-retentive soil it grows happily in the border, but it can also be used as a marginal or even as a pond plant, in water up to 15cm deep, provided it gets full sun.

CORNUS

In a damp spot that never dries out, even in summer, *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica' (shown) or *C. alba* Baton Rouge (= 'Minbat') are unbeatable. Use as massed planting or as a single shrub underplanted with bergenias or snowdrops. In places that are generally drier but may still be prone to occasional flooding, try *C. sanguinea* cultivars, such as 'Midwinter Fire' or 'Anny's Winter Orange' instead. Once established, these shrubs can be coppiced annually or biannually, for a consistent supply of colourful new wood, which will also help keep the plant compact in smaller spaces.

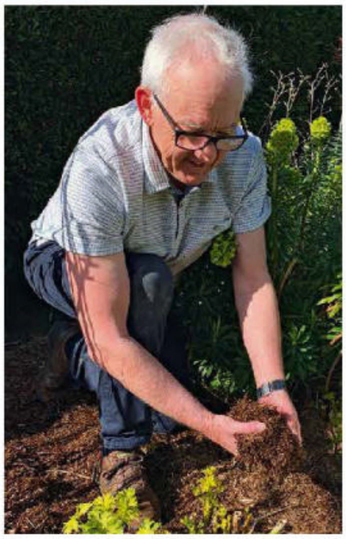
KAY ROXBY, ALAN GREGG / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; JASON INGRAM

Advertisement feature

Strulch®

The straw mulch for organic gardening

Used by major horticultural gardens



'Strulch' is a scientific success story. At Leeds University, Dr Geoff Whiteley found he could replicate a natural process which preserves straw. He and his wife Jackie brought the new environmentally friendly, biodegradable mulch to market . Fast becoming the preferred mulch of professional and amateur gardeners.

Strulch is made from wheat straw and the mineralisation process preserves the straw and turns it dark brown. It has a neutral pH so can be used anywhere in the garden and it lasts for up to two years. Over time, the mulch improves soil structure and adds nutrients. The physical properties of the mulch and the added minerals deter slugs and snails.

Strulch is available in 9kg bags from our stockists. For best value buy direct in bulk on pallets of 12, 25, 40 or 48 x 13.5 kg bags.

Professional gardeners see the benefits too:

"We have been using Strulch for over 20 years, we use different mulches including home produced but Strulch is our 'go to' product where we need reliable weed suppression, moisture retention and preservation on the soil surface. Strulch is slow to breakdown, successful where there is competing demand from hedges in herbaceous border designs and non-rotational areas of kitchen/productive gardens. It is both lightweight and easy to apply and yet doesn't blow off the bed, is quick to spread, it doesn't clump or ball either and the depth of application can be varied easily. One can reliably get two years out of an initial application, and this allows us to vary our practices from year to year" **Elizabeth Balmforth, Head of Gardens**, Mount St John.

Mineralised™ STRAW

With slug and snail deterrent

Available in bulk and in small amounts from our stockists
visit: www.strulch.co.uk or call 01943 863610

Exclusive offer

LE MANOIR AUX QUAT'SAISONS
A BELMOND HOTEL
OXFORDSHIRE

Explore the gardens at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons

Don't miss your chance to learn from the gardening experts at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Raymond Blanc's Michelin-starred hotel in Oxfordshire. In this exclusive event for *Gardens Illustrated* readers, you can enjoy a garden tour and seed-sowing experience hosted by the hotel's gardening team.

The gardens at this renowned hotel are the living magic of Le Manoir. There are 11 enchanting gardens and orchards to explore, from the tranquil Japanese tea garden to the unusual 'Mushroom Valley'. Each has been inspired by Raymond's travels, childhood, favourite books and the wonderful people he's met.

You'll also get to sample some of Le Manoir's delicious cuisine, with morning tea, coffee and home-made biscuits, Champagne and canapés in the conservatory or private garden, followed by a three-course lunch with selected wines, tea, coffee and petits fours. This really is a unique opportunity to experience the best of what Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons has to offer, and take home inspiration for your own outdoor space.

EVENT DETAILS

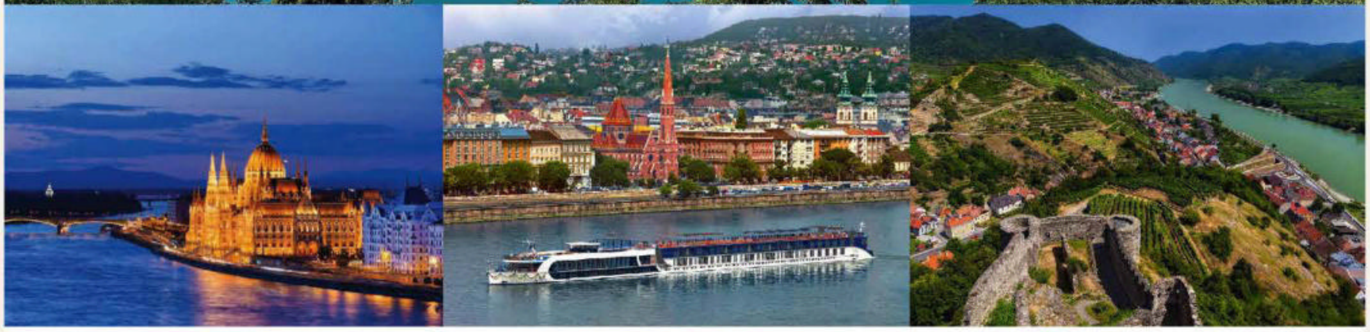
This event at takes place on Tuesday 4 June from 10am and costs £260. Email events.mqs@belmond.com to book or call 01844 277200

SAVE ON YOUR NEXT CRUISE

JOIN CRUISE COLLECTIVE FOR FREE AND ENJOY EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS

AmaWaterways™

The cruise takes you to ports in Germany, Austria and Hungary along the Danube



ENJOY A £150 DISCOUNT WITH AN AMA WATERWAYS RIVER DANUBE CRUISE

Save £150 when you set out on an enchanting voyage with AmaWaterways, navigating the legendary waterways of the Danube in the utmost luxury aboard a modern and stylish river ship.

Your journey along the fabled river Danube begins at Nuremberg in Germany, where you can choose from three exciting excursions, including a guided tour of the medieval city or an exploration of famous Second World War sites. As you cruise towards Regensburg through the Main-Danube Canal, immerse yourself in the historic charm of the city by opting for either a guided walking tour or a scenic bike tour to the Walhala memorial.

Explore Passau's cobblestone streets and marvel at St Stephen's Cathedral, or venture on an alternative full-day tour to explore the musical allure of Salzburg. Discover Melk Abbey, then sail through the picturesque Wachau Valley to Vienna before concluding your unforgettable journey in Budapest, exploring both the Buda and Pest sides of the Danube.

SAVE £150 ON THIS CRUISE

To claim your exclusive discount on this cruise, simply sign up for Cruise Collective. This is free and gives you access to amazing deals for a range of cruise lines. Scan the QR code to access your discount

---

Your passport to unforgettable cruises, unbeatable deals and family memories that will last a lifetime. Simply join for free at:

CRUISE-COLLECTIVE.COM

CRUISE COLLECTIVE

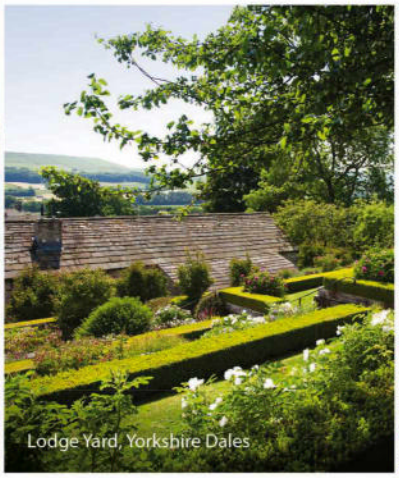
Les and Margaret Hill with daughter Julie and grandson Blair at Duloe Manor

Enjoy a lifetime of holidays in beautiful places

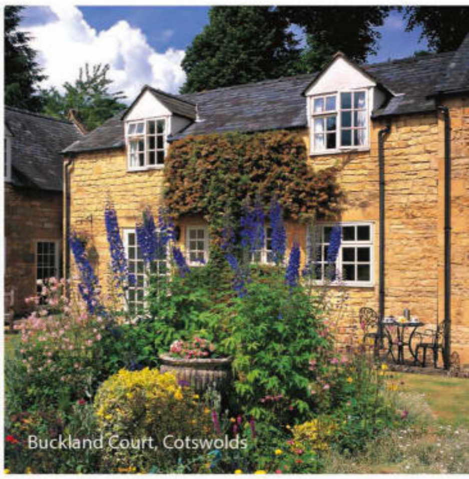
"Since our last visit to Duloe Manor we have chalked up over 80 HPB holidays and now here we are, 20 years later, spending a different kind of family time, in lovely gardens, with a new addition to the clan."

Les and Margaret Hill Bondholders holidaying at HPB's Duloe Manor in Cornwall

Head gardener Richard Doney and his team are the heart and soul of the garden here at Duloe Manor



Lodge Yard, Yorkshire Dales

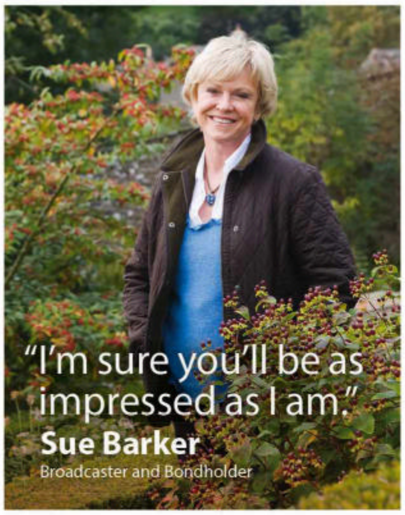


Buckland Court, Cotswolds

This advertisement is issued by **HPB Management Limited (HPBM)**, the main UK agent and the property manager for HPB, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, registered at HPB House, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 8EH. HPB is available exclusively through HPBM. HPB is issued by HPB Assurance Limited (HPBA) registered in the Isle of Man and authorised by the Financial Services Authority there. HPBM promotes only HPB and is not independent of HPBA. Holders of policies issued by HPBA will not be protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme if the company becomes unable to meet its liabilities to them but Isle of Man compensation arrangements apply to new policies.

hpb
The Holiday Property Bond

Although Duloe Manor has exceptional gardens, it is by no means unique in the Holiday Property Bond portfolio. HPB's homes are in beautiful locations, and we've always been at pains to ensure that the gardens and landscaping surrounding the accommodation should complement, and enhance, what's already there, while remaining totally in keeping with the character of the site. St Brides Castle in Pembrokeshire and Lodge Yard in the Yorkshire Dales have both won prestigious gardening awards; the gardens at Upper Norton, near Ludlow, opened for charity as part of the National Garden Scheme, are the perfect place for quiet contemplation, as indeed is the site itself; and at Buckland Court the garden has been recently transformed into what it should be: a proper Cotswold garden. Further afield, Le Manoir du Hilguy, HPB's Breton château, sits in 11 acres of elegant grounds, which in spring and early summer are ablaze with vibrant rhododendrons; El Pueblito de Alfaix, in southern Spain, is made even more perfect by cascades of fragrant bougainvillea; and the award-winning botanical gardens are one of the finest features of El Balcón de Santa Ana, the Holiday Property Bond's beautiful holiday resort on the Canary Island of La Gomera.


"I'm sure you'll be as impressed as I am."
Sue Barker
Broadcaster and Bondholder

Imagine being able to enjoy fantastic holidays in all these and many more beautiful locations – HPB's portfolio currently includes more than 1,500 holiday homes in over 30 exclusive UK and European destinations.

Now imagine making those dreams a reality for you and your family this year and every year, *forever*.

That's exactly what over 40,000 discerning holidaymakers have already done and people like Les and Margaret Hill are delighted to say they've "never looked back".

Like so many families, the Hills have discovered a refreshing new approach to the way they plan and enjoy their holidays. It's an approach that's given them a more affordable alternative to buying and maintaining their own holiday property and it's one that offers unrivalled flexibility. You can even pass the benefits on to your children and grandchildren so they will have a lifetime of wonderful holidays to look forward to.

It's never been easier to experience the Holiday Property Bond for yourself, free and without obligation.

Please read "Exclusive holidays for life" below to understand the risks as well as the benefits and then request your free Information Pack today. We'll send you everything you need to decide whether the Bond is right for you.

You'll find details of our Bond holiday locations together with information about how you can book a private tour at one of our UK sites or arrange a meeting with a representative – either in person or virtually via an online video call.

El Balcón de Santa Ana, La Gomera

Le Manoir du Hilguy, Brittany

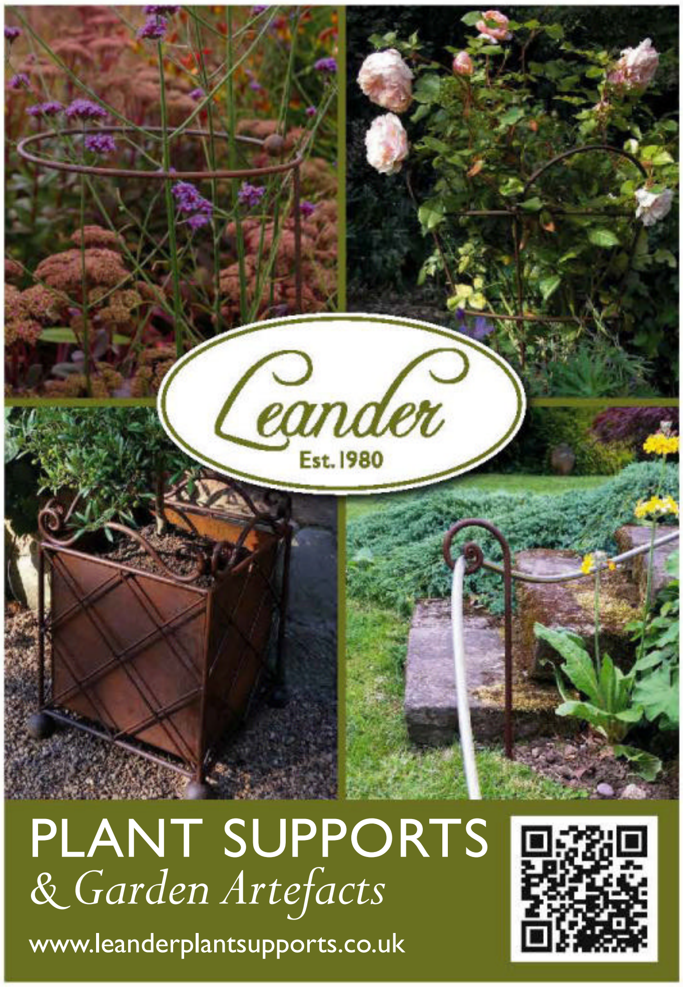
Request your free Information Pack

Visit **hpb.co.uk/gi**

Call FREE on
0800 66 54 90

Scan the QR code

Exclusive holidays for life An initial payment from £5,000 and a quarterly fee of just over £37 (that is around £150 a year), which can increase in line with but not exceed the Retail Price Index Excluding Mortgage Interest (RPIX), gives you access to all HPB's holiday homes. For each HPB holiday, you will pay a no-profit user charge covering only property running and maintenance costs and use of on-site facilities. The average charge is the same throughout the year, and for a studio is around £360 a week and £540 for a two bedroom property. Larger properties are also available. After an initial charge of 25% your money is invested in a fund of holiday properties and securities. The fund itself meets annual charges of 2.5% of its net assets at cost, calculated monthly. Your investment return is purely in the form of holidays and, as with most investments, your capital is at risk. You can surrender your investment to the company after two years or more (subject to deferral in exceptional circumstances) but you will get back less than you invested because of the charges referred to above, as well as other overheads and changes in the value of the fund's properties and securities.



Leander
Est. 1980

PLANT SUPPORTS
& Garden Artefacts
www.leanderplantsupports.co.uk

RHS Malvern Spring Festival

9 – 12 May 2024

BOOK NOW AT
rhsmalvern.co.uk

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
RHS
Three Counties

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
my pension expert

10%OFF
WHEN YOU USE CODE
GAR10
*VALID TO 31.12.24
see website for terms and conditions

Agriframes™
Garden Inspiration

agriframes.co.uk | 0117 934 1790

Garden Structures . Fruit Cages . Plant Supports . Kitchen Garden . Outdoor Living

DOWNTOOLS

Book reviews, Q&A, the crossword and the big idea

Flower grower Polly Nicholson shows how to choose and combine tulips beautifully in her new book *The Tulip Garden*, reviewed on page 114.

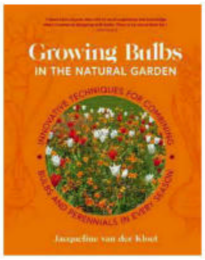
ANDREW MONTGOMERY

The Tulip Garden offers advice on growing a wide range tulips from historic Dutch and broken cultivars to species and annuals.

THE REVIEW

You wait forever for one great book to capture the enduring appeal of bulbs, with advice on how to collect and combine the best – and then two come along at once

The
Tulip
Garden
PHAIDON
POLLY NICHOLSON


Growing Bulbs
IN THE NATURAL GARDEN
INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR COMBINING BULBS AND PERENNIALS IN EVERY SEASON
Jacqueline van der Kloet

THE TULIP GARDEN: GROWING AND COLLECTING SPECIES, RARE AND ANNUAL VARIETIES
by Polly Nicholson, photographs by Andrew Montgomery, Phaidon, £29.95, ISBN 978-1838667689

GROWING BULBS IN THE NATURAL GARDEN: INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR COMBINING BULBS AND PERENNIALS IN EVERY SEASON
by Jacqueline van der Kloet, Timber Press, £28, ISBN 978-1643264028

As the bulb catalogues start to appear in late summer, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the range on offer. There's also the risk of complacency as you look out over a fulsome summer garden. Come the chilly days of winter, however, we might rue such foolhardiness as we search out the hopeful shoots of spring's earliest flowers.

But it isn't just laziness that means I plant fewer bulbs each year. I too have swooned over the latest must-have tulips – only to be disillusioned by the constant up-rooting by squirrels and badgers. Added to which, the sustainability of annual bulb planting has become a pressing concern.

Both tulip expert Polly Nicholson's *The Tulip Garden* and Dutch plant specialist Jacqueline van der Kloet's *Growing Bulbs in the Natural Garden* offer an honest perspective, emphasising a more naturalistic approach and detailing the best choices and techniques to help us navigate such conundrums.

As an organic flower grower and florist, Nicholson has a reputation for discerning cuttings and arrangements. In her Wiltshire garden at Blacklands, she is indulging a passion for tulips with a thoughtful and methodical approach, all of which has been distilled in this, her debut book.

Starting with their cultural and historical influence, Nicholson goes on to feature wild, species, heritage, English Florists and indeed those questionable annual tulips, giving us inspiration and tips for each type. To have a display return – and even improve – each year is now a key consideration when choosing tulips, and to have Nicholson's proven choices is invaluable.

Nicholson's descriptions, accompanied by Andrew Montgomery's sumptuous photography, are detailed and closely observed with added personal notes on growing, cutting and naturalising long-term displays. She describes her tulipophilia as 'the habit of a lifetime' and her exploration of English Florist tulips adds a fascinating dimension. These are the rare and exquisite blooms grown competitively for showing. Nicholson explains the intricacies of their classifications and criteria for winning. Even annual tulips, described as 'the foie-gras geese of the flower world… sold at the point where they are fit to burst',

▷

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Keder greenhouse

kedergreenhouse.co.uk
01386 49094
sales@kedergreenhouse.co.uk

MADE IN BRITAIN

CARE LESS ABOUT THE WEATHER

Our advanced cellular cladding is extremely thermal efficient and saves on energy and heating costs.

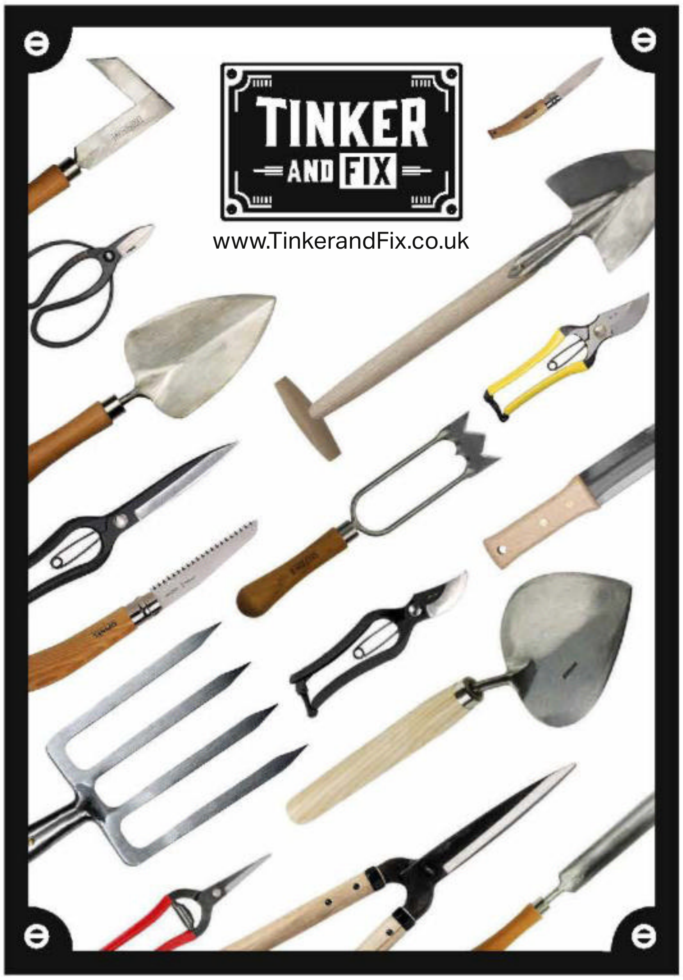
It insulates and diffuses natural light, giving an even spread of light and warmth, resulting in optimum growing conditions.

Designed to withstand winds in excess of 120mph, and heavy loads.

So, whatever the weather...

...ESCAPE TO THE KEDER

Show season is fast approaching -
come and see us at the Malvern Spring Show 9th to 12th May



TINKER AND FIX

www.TinkerandFix.co.uk

WHITE COTTAGE
GREENHOUSES

Craftsmen of the finest growing spaces

accoya Approved manufacturer

WHITECOTTAGE.CO.UK
01270 753826

Unique travel experiences
INDIA Incredible & Irresistible

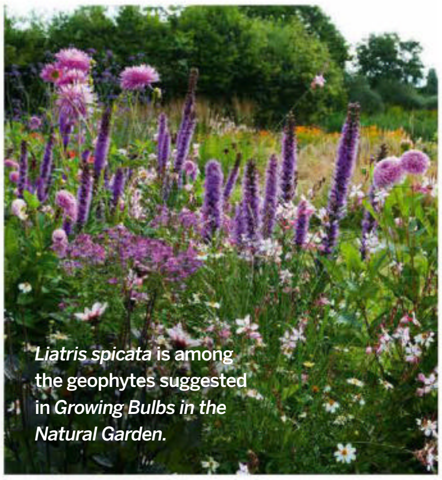
Have you ever dreamed of a holiday to India that is meticulously planned, luxuriously pampering and filled with fascinating cultural experiences – where you are in charge? Elevate your travel experience with one of our holidays to India.

India is one of the world's most fascinating countries and its unique spirit will leave you enchanted and mesmerised wherever you choose to travel. Our Incredible India tours are carefully curated to take you on an immersive journey of discovery and, because we keep group sizes small, authentic experiences are guaranteed.

Our holidays offer first-class accommodation, small group sizes and the option to 'go bespoke', extending and/or enhancing your stay, as you wish!

ECT Travel

ecttravel.com hello@ecttravel.com +44 (0) 1225 333 747



Liatris spicata is among the geophytes suggested in *Growing Bulbs in the Natural Garden.*

JACQUELINE VAN DER KLOET

> So often we order too few bulbs and are disappointed by a weak display

▷ are hard to resist, and it is welcome to learn about how to more efficiently and sustainably grow these.

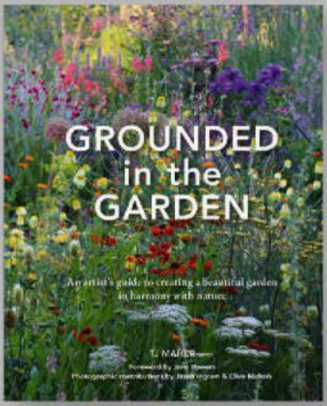
In *Growing Bulbs in the Natural Garden*, Jacqueline van der Kloet takes a broader approach, encompassing dahlias, begonias, iris, peonies and canna lilies alongside tulips, narcissi and crocuses. For her, bulbs are more accurately termed geophytes – 'plants with underground storage organs' – and her selection considers bulbs, corms, rhizomes and tubers as part of more 'nonchalant' plantings. Starting with the basics and approachable colour-themed choices, Van der Kloet moves on to how to include bulbs in mixed plantings, illustrating the versatility of this plant group. Planting plans are particularly revealing, as is the suggested quantities list for achieving either a combined or mass effect. And yes, it is more than you think – so often we order too few bulbs and are disappointed by a weak display.

With advice for settings such as wall edgings, containers, green roofs and tried-and-tested favourites, this is a compact guide to achieving year-round interest. One note of caution, however: as a Dutch writer, some of her suggested cultivars may be hard to source in the UK, and I did wonder about the inclusion of *Allium triquetrum*, given that many consider the three-cornered leek an invasive species in UK hedgerows.

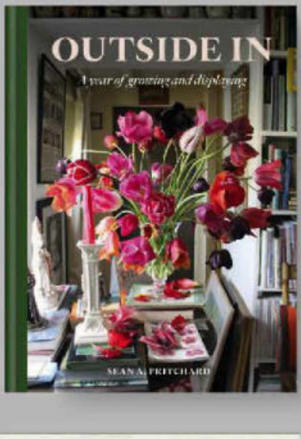
Have a pen and paper ready to jot down irresistible recommendations, and you'll eagerly anticipate your next bulb order. The sense of hope these unassuming sleeping plant packages bring gardeners is ever keener with Nicholson and Van der Kloet as guides.

Reviewer Sorrel Everton is a garden editor and former *Gardens Illustrated* deputy editor.

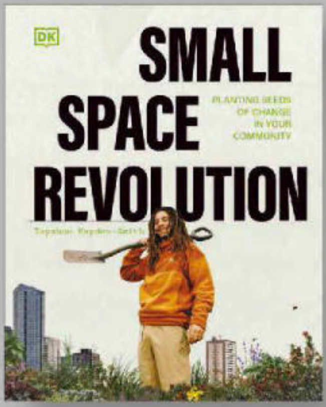
Recommended reads this month



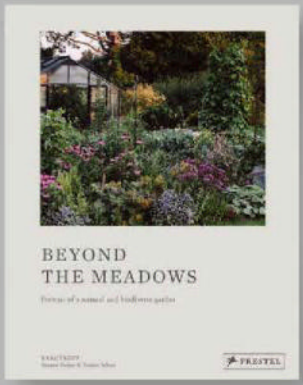
GROUNDED IN THE GARDEN: AN ARTIST'S GUIDE TO CREATING A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN IN HARMONY WITH NATURE
by TJ Maher,
Pimpernel Press, £25,
ISBN 978-1914902079
In his first book, Irish artist and plantsman TJ Maher shares his gardening philosophy and reveals how he created a beautiful garden that is a haven for insects and birds. It includes his tulip choices, recommended trees for small gardens and advice on pot displays.



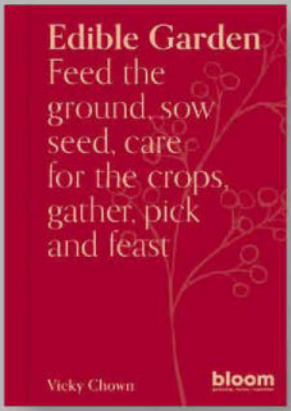
OUTSIDE IN: A YEAR OF GROWING AND DISPLAYING
by Sean A Pritchard,
Mitchell Beazley, £30,
ISBN 978-1784728854
Featuring ideas that are inventive and charming and don't require oodles of blooms, garden designer Pritchard shares how he grows, harvests and arranges flowers and foliage from the garden of his bohemian Somerset cottage all year round.



SMALL SPACE REVOLUTION: PLANTING SEEDS OF CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY
by Tayshan Hayden-Smith,
Dorling Kindersley, £16.99,
ISBN 978-0241615041
Tayshan Hayden-Smith initiated the Grenfell Garden of Peace and is now a garden activist and community advocate who has helped create two community-inspired gardens at RHS Chelsea. In his debut book, he takes inspiration from community gardens around the world to show how to turn the germ of an idea into a joyful reality, on even the smallest scale or budget.



BEYOND THE MEADOWS: PORTRAIT OF A NATURAL AND BIODIVERSE GARDEN
by Susann Probst and Yannic Schon,
Prestel, £32.50,
ISBN 978-3791389837
In 2018, photographers Susann Probst and Yannic Schon left Berlin for the German countryside with the aim of growing produce sustainably. The pair share what they've learned about garden design, soil, beneficial organisms, pests, edible perennials, plant care and self-sufficiency.


Edible Garden
Feed the ground, sow seed, care for the crops, gather, pick and feast
Vicky Chown
bloom

EDIBLE GARDEN: BLOOM GARDENER'S GUIDE
by Vicky Chown,
Frances Lincoln, £12.99,
ISBN 978-0711281370
The latest in the Bloom Gardener's Guide series – no frills but stylish and comprehensive gardening handbooks. Written by a professional forager who teaches urban food growing, it covers planting the best edibles in your garden borders and pots, as well as raised beds or kitchen gardens.

‘My guilty gardening secret? Not composting’

In his new book, *Your Outdoor Room*, designer and TV presenter **Manoj Malde** is equipping us all with the tools to create a harmonious design for our gardens

Tell us about the new book and why you wrote it Not everyone has the luxury of hiring a garden designer, so I wrote this book to empower people to design their own gardens. Everyone deserves a beautiful garden that resonates with their personality and lifestyle. I delve into the crucial aspects of garden design, including colour palettes, sustainability, biodiversity and budgeting.

What did you learn from writing it? Writing *Your Outdoor Room* has allowed me to share my expertise and has deepened my respect for the editorial craft – a collaboration that has resulted in a book that I am proud to call my own.

If there’s one idea you’d like to share from the book, what would it be? Plan your garden on paper and avoid working on each area in isolation. This enables you to consider factors such as flow, balance and overall aesthetics, ensuring a harmonious and well-co-ordinated design.

I’ll read anything about… I want to explore the richness, traditions and culture of India and learn more about my heritage. I find Crete captivating and hope to live there one day, but I also love other Greek Islands. I enjoy reading books about them, and fiction set there. I also love books that explore other cultures, wildlife and nature.

The books on my night stand right now *Uprooting* by Marchelle Farrell: so much of what Marchelle writes resonates with me. Also, *The Pigment Trail* by Debra Luker, full of colour and inspiration from India.

What first sparked your interest in gardening? My childhood was spent in Mombasa, Kenya. Our large balcony, adorned with jasmine, roses and birds of paradise, and nurtured by my dad, sparked my connection with nature. We moved to the UK when I was six. My brother Nish played a pivotal role in sparking my interest in gardening by creating a vegetable plot. The experience of tending to tomatoes and runner beans and the more exotic coriander, fenugreek, mooli and purple rat’s tails became a poignant reminder of our lives in Mombasa.

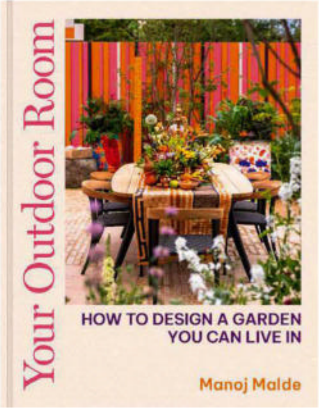
What’s your guilty gardening secret? Not composting at home. I will soon be more sustainable, transitioning to one of those large hot bins that convert green waste into compost in around 90 days.

What is your current garden like? In its infancy. We have a wide patio with a pergola on one side, re-roofed with beautiful cedar shingles. The shed is going to be screened off with vertical slatted trellis. At last, we will have a hidden space for a compost bin. We are blessed with a stunning weeping willow. The afternoon and evening sun are at the rear, making it the perfect spot for areas for outdoor dining and lounging. We want to introduce a wildlife-friendly planting scheme, more planting around the seating area to create a cosy feel and some more trees and evergreen shrubs for structure and winter interest. Borders with tall ethereal plants will add movement and hazy screens, enabling the garden to unfold gradually.

Can you share your biggest gardening failure? Leaving two mature *Aloe polyphylla* outside knowing that we were going to have heavy snow – I lost them both. A lesson learned – even plants accustomed to snow and cold in their native environments may not fare well in the same conditions in a different location.

What’s your favourite landscape? There is a very special location in Crete called Octopus Bay. It is where I proposed to my husband Clive. The hillsides are adorned with *Euphorbia dendroides*, *Phlomis lanata*, *Cyclamen graecum* and *Cyclamen creticum*.

What else are you up to at the moment ? I’m working on some exciting projects in Edinburgh and Cambridge and am eagerly awaiting approval for the next stage of works for a project abroad. I’m also in discussions about a sensory garden for a medical clinic. And I still have a honeymoon to organise.

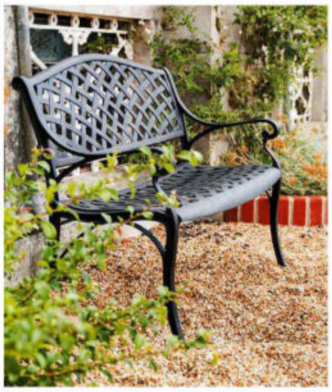


YOUR OUTDOOR ROOM: HOW TO DESIGN A GARDEN YOU CAN LIVE IN
by Manoj Malde,
Frances Lincoln, £20,
ISBN 978-0711282247

10% OFF
Use code: **GI10**

Maintenance Free Garden Furniture

Lazy Susan specialises in aluminium garden furniture. Each hand crafted piece is powder coated to produce a lasting finish which will not rust. Our furniture is maintenance free and designed to live outside all year.



Product shown above: Catherine Table

01243 684 158
lazysusan.co.uk
Offer ends 04/05/2024

Lazy Susan

Designed to last a lifetime

HOMES & ANTIQUES

Stylish & sustainable – the magazine for living with old and new

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS

- Save a fantastic 50%* on the shop price
- Pay just £2.99 a month by Direct Debit
- Never miss an issue of your favourite magazine filled with the best home inspiration and fantastic features on collectable antiques

SAVE 50% *when you subscribe**

Philip Sowels

SIMPLE WAYS TO ORDER

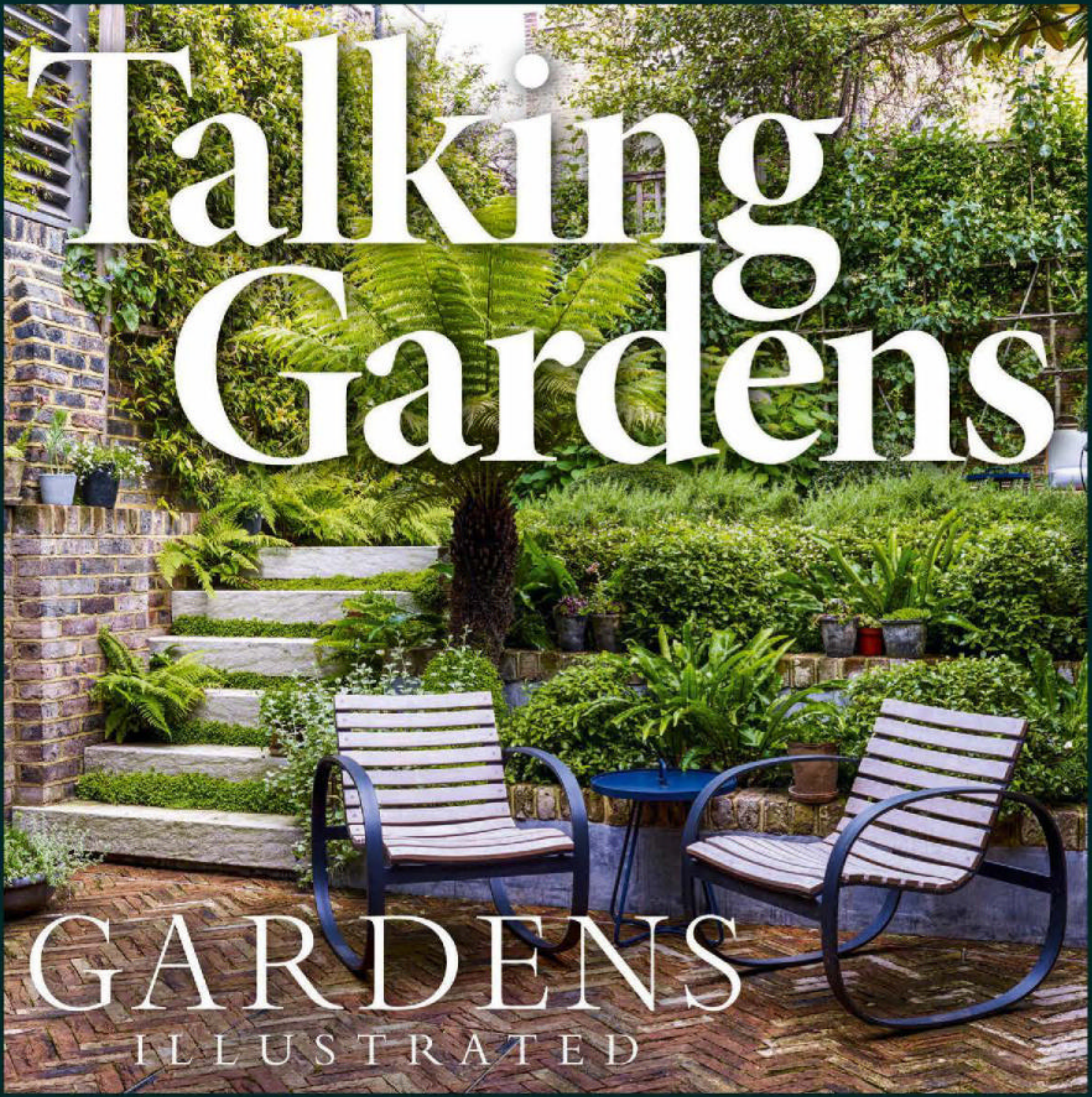
Visit **ourmediashop.com/HAH24**
Or call **0333 016 2117** and quote **HAH24**

*50% saving is only available to UK residents paying by monthly Direct Debit. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 8am–6pm and Sat 9am–1pm.

Don't just read *Gardens Illustrated*…

Listen to it too

New episodes of the Garden Podcast of the Year drop this spring



JASON INGRAM

COMING SOON: SEASON 3

With guests including Andy Sturgeon, Ann-Marie Powell, Katy Merrington, Jimi Blake and Miria Harris

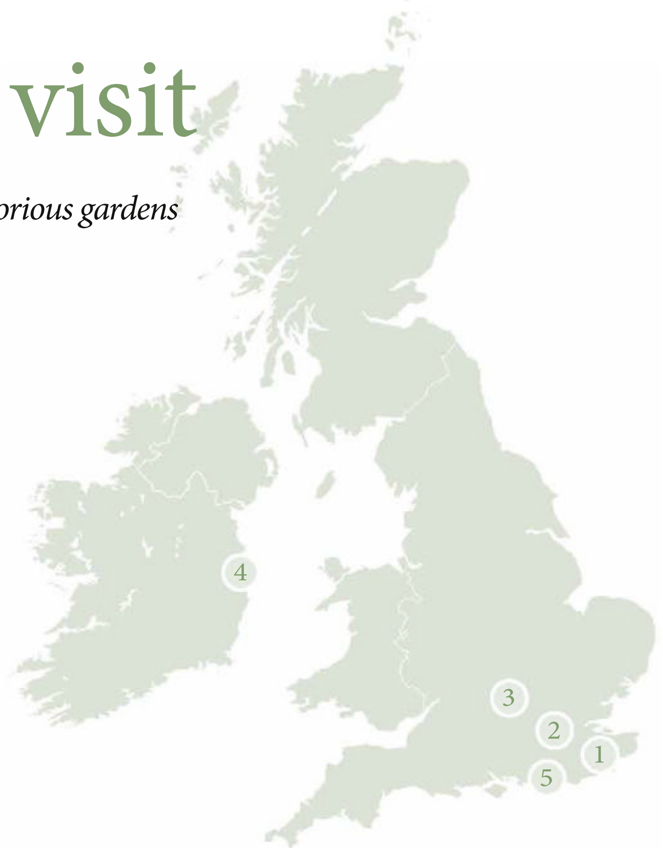
You can find *Talking Gardens* on Apple Podcasts, Google, Spotify, Acast and all good podcast providers. Subscribe so you never miss an episode.

Listen to *Talking Gardens*

by scanning this QR code with your phone camera link.chtbl.com/TalkingGardens

Spring gardens to visit

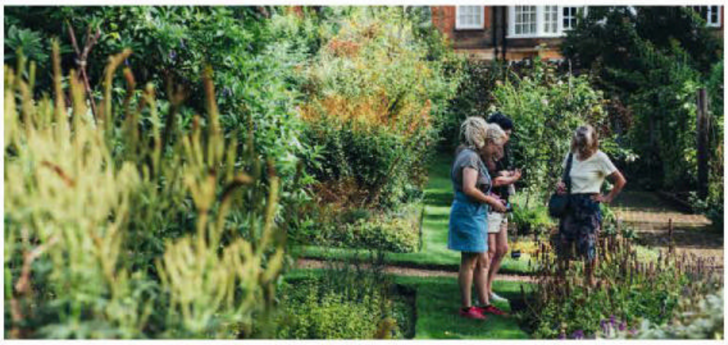
With spring in full swing, make time to visit this collection of glorious gardens



1 HEVER CASTLE & GARDENS

From blossoms to bluebells, Hever Castle & Gardens has got spring covered with a colourful celebration from 15-28 April. With thousands of tulips, spring bedding, cherry and apple blossom galore, magnolias, early rhododendrons, hyacinths, camassias and bluebells, there's much to celebrate in the grounds.

Kent TN8 7NG | 01732 865224 | hevercastle.co.uk



2 CHELSEA PHYSIC GARDEN

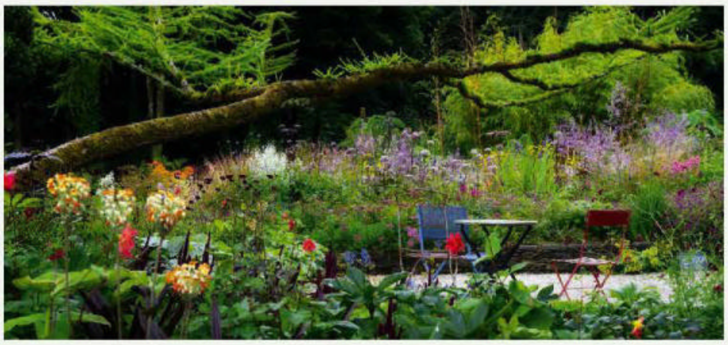
Enjoy free entry during the Plant Festival on Saturday 27 April. Plant market, demonstrations, food and entrance to London's oldest botanic garden. Open all year round, Sunday–Friday, with a café on site. Find out more on the website below.

London SW3 4HS | chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

3 WATERPERRY GARDENS

Celebrate Snowdrop Season and the first signs of spring, with over 60 different snowdrop varieties carpeting the ornamental gardens over the season. Come and enjoy a walk around the gardens to see these little heralds of spring in a magical setting. A place to explore, relax, and shop in beautiful surroundings all year round.

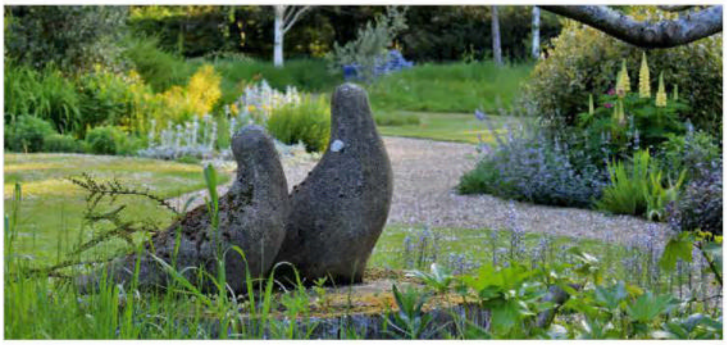
Oxfordshire OX33 1LA | 01844 339226 | waterperrygardens.co.uk



4 DUBLIN GARDEN TRAIL

Sixteen of the most celebrated private gardens in Dublin invite you to explore! Expect expert plantspeople, extensive botanical collections and gardens rich in design and art. From large demesnes to urban gems. For group tours and independent travellers.

+353 87 9724271 | dublingardens.com | dublingardengroup@gmail.com



5 DENMANS GARDEN

Created by Joyce Robinson, a pioneer in gravel gardening, and the former home of landscape designer, John Brookes MBE, Denmans is an award-winning Grade II, RHS Partner renowned for its curvilinear layout. Colour, unusual plants, structure and fragrance year-round. Midpines Café, shop and plant centre.

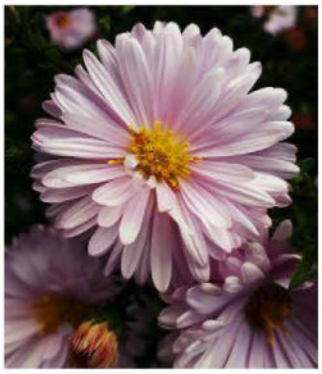
Fontwell, Nr. Arundel BN18 0SU | 01243 278950 | denmans.org

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

Nursery guide

Get inspired with the best plant, tree and shrub suppliers

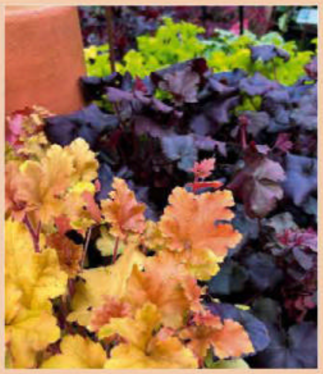
OLD COURT NURSERIES



Specialist nursery and garden set at the foot of the Malvern Hills. The one-and-a-half acre garden is full of year-round interest and the adjacent nursery is well stocked with plants grown on site. Holders of the National Plant Collection of autumn-flowering asters and related genre (Michaelmas daisies), as well as an extensive tender succulent and fern collection. Mail order available.

autumnasters.co.uk | 01684 540416

BUNKERS HILL PLANT NURSERY



A family-run plant nursery near Woodstock in Oxfordshire, with an old-fashioned feel and traditional values. In autumn and winter we specialise in bareroot stock of roses, soft fruit, fruit trees, ornamental trees, hedging, pleached trees and rootball plants. Then in the spring and summer the nursery is bursting with a huge selection of perennials and shrubs with an assortment of rare or unusual plants. We are also pleased to send bulbs, roses and soft fruit nationwide.

bunkershillgardenshop.co.uk | 01869 331492

ASHWOOD NURSERIES

A plantsman's paradise and an independent nursery situated in the West Midlands open seven days a week. We specialise in hellebores, hardy cyclamen, salvias, hepaticas, lewisias, hydrangeas, dwarf conifers, snowdrops, primula auricula and many more beautiful plants. Our UK mail-order service sends plants, garden essentials and gifts direct to your doorstep. John's Garden is open every Saturday for charity. Please visit our website for full details.

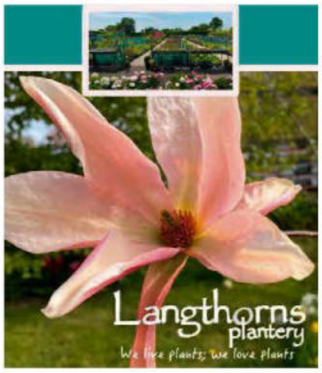
ashwoodnurseries.com | 01384 401996

BLUEBELL ARBORETUM & NURSERY

Specialist nursery growing hardy trees, shrubs and climbers including a huge selection of unusual species and cultivars. Informative website with plenty of plant photos and a reliable mail-order service is available. Surrounded by a beautiful nine-acre woodland garden (an RHS partner garden), which is open to visitors all year round.

bluebellnursery.com | 01530 413700

LANGTHORNS PLANTERY



With an eye for the unusual and a vast range of plants of all sizes, the team at Langthorns Plantery are on hand to help you choose the right plants for your garden. Our collection of more than 5,000 varieties includes ornamental and fruit trees, shrubs, perennials, roses, climbers, bamboos, grasses, herbs and wildflowers. View online or visit our Plantery and share our passion for plants.

langthorns.com | 01371 872611

BEETHAM NURSERIES

Beetham Nurseries is an independent garden centre on the A6 in south Cumbria. Now in our 40th year, we offer a huge range of plants, shrubs, and more. Our Growing Nursery has a fantastic reputation for Cumbrian-grown perennials, cultivated by our passionate team. With our Garden Centre, Food Hall, Home & Gift Shop, Garden Café and Wood Fired Kitchen, you'll find plenty to explore!

beethamnurseries.co.uk | 015395 63630

6 ISSUES FROM £9.99

Discover something new this Spring with our fantastic introductory offers across our diverse range of magazines. Enjoy 6 issues from as little as £9.99, conveniently delivered direct to your door.

COUNTRYFILE

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

Science Focus

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

HOMES & ANTIQUES

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

Mountain Biking UK

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

Simply Crochet

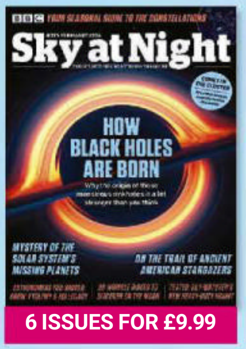
6 ISSUES FOR £14.99

CYCLING PLUS

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

Simply Knitting

6 ISSUES FOR £14.99


Sky at Night

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

love Embroidery

6 ISSUES FOR £11.99

6 ISSUES FOR £9.99

The World of Cross Stitching

6 ISSUES FOR £11.99

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE:

- Subscriptions from £9.99 for 6 issues
- Continue to make great savings after your trial period
- Enjoy easy and convenient delivery direct to your door
- **Never miss an issue of your favourite magazine**

YOUR TWO EASY WAYS TO ORDER

Visit **ourmediashop.com/SP24HA**

Call **0330 053 8660†** quote code **SP24HA**

SCAN ME

---

*This offer closes on 31st May 2024 and is valid for UK delivery addresses and by direct debit only. The discounts shown are savings calculated as a percentage of the full shop price. For overseas rates visit www.ourmediashop.com. Should the magazine ordered change in frequency; we will honour the number of issues and not the term of the subscription. You are free to cancel your subscription at any time – if you cancel within 2 weeks of receiving your penultimate issue you will pay no more than the trial rate. We run trial offers throughout the year to give our customers an opportunity to try a new title before committing to a long-term subscription. These are introductory offers, and we reserve the right to reject or cancel any application for a trial subscription offer if the customer has previously purchased a trial offer for the same magazine or any other magazine in the Our Media portfolio. †UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm

ALITAGS
PLANT LABELS

Annual labelling is a thing of the past with Alitags. Simply write on Alitags aluminium labels with Alitags or HB pencil. The pencil will react with our specially made aluminium tags and become permanent.

Alitags labels can also be punched with Alitag character punches & jig.

Copper, Teak, Bamboo tags and Numbered tags are also available.

33 Bourne Lane, Much
Hadham, Herts SG10 6ER.
Tel 01279 842685
www.alitags.com

Andrew Crace
High Quality Garden Furniture

The Pavilion Wheelbarrow Seat

Slatted Wheelbarrow Chair

Indian Lattice 2 Seater painted Blue

Medium Edo painted White

Chinoiserie 2 Seater painted Malachite

Charles Over 4 Seater painted Tioram

Park 3 Seater

Leagrave 4 Seater

Hatfield Table & Charles Over Chairs

Extended Octagonal Table & Chairs

Made and Crafted in the UK. www.andrewcrace.com
Bourne Lane, Much Hadham, Herts SG10 6ER. Tel 01279 842685

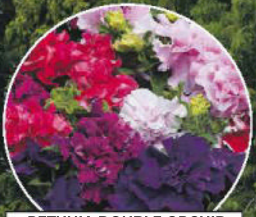
SUTTONS
Est. 1806

By appointment to His Majesty the King
Seedsmen
Suttons Consumer Products Limited, Devon

72 Best Value Summer Plants

GERANIUM ZONAL JACKPOT

BUSY LIZZIE 'PEARL ISLAND'


PETUNIA DOUBLE ORCHID

NICOTIANA EAU DE COLOGNE

RUDBECKIA ALL SORTS

BEGONIA LOTTO

BEGONIA ORGANDY

GAZANIA TIGER STRIPES

VERBENA QUARTZ

PETUNIA FRENZY

LOBELIA ULTRA CASCADE

BACOPA SNOWTOPIA

72 Best Value Summer Plants ~~£68.88~~

ONLY £9.99

HURRY Offer ends May 2nd

- **Everything you need to make your beds, borders, hanging baskets and patio containers look amazing this year!**
- **Colourful, long-lasting summer displays**
- **Delightful colours, heights, textures & scents**

Fill beds, borders, containers and baskets with these bumper bargain summer annuals. Height: Up to 60cm (24"). Spread: Up to 45cm (18").

Geranium Zonal Jackpot - Weather tolerant, F1 hybrid pelargoniums ensure a spectacular, free flowering display throughout summer.

Busy Lizzie 'Pearl Island' - Bears long-lasting, shimmering blooms in pink, orange and white.

Petunia Double Orchid - Widely acknowledged as the world's finest double petunias, with exquisite orchid-like, ruffled blooms in a medley of colours.

Nicotiana Eau De Cologne - A special mixture offering uniform, mid-height plants with upward-facing Nicotiana flowers, a tapestry of glowing colours.

Rudbeckia All Sorts - All your favourite rudbeckias, including the bestselling Rudbeckia 'Cherry Brandy' and many other doubles, singles, quilled types.

Begonia Lotto - An unexpected, exceptionally large flowering variety.

Begonia Organdy - A winning combination of bronze and green foliage contrasts beautifully with the colourful blooms. For wet or dry conditions.

Gazania Tiger Stripes - The wide daisy-like blooms of Gazania 'Tiger Stripes Mixed' sport a contrasting stripe on every petal for a really cheerful display.

Lobelia Ultra Cascade - Cover unsightly walls and fences with a cascade of blooms! A long flowering mix that will last the whole summer long.

Verbena Quartz - Carefully selected mix of early flowering, bright coloured verbena with excellent mildew resistance guaranteed long lasting displays.

Petunia Frenzy - Our best-selling Petunia 'Frenzy Mixed' contains fantastic blend of 20 over different types of petunia flowers.

Bacopa Snowtopia - Not every plant can be the star of the show! This pretty half hardy trailing plant is a valuable filler plant for a hanging baskets and containers.

6 plant individual variety packs are available online for £4.99.

Plug plants supplied approx. 3-6cm high. Pre-order for May Despatch.

ONLY £1

MAXICROP Plant Treatment

For **ONLY £1** we will treat your whole order with MAXICROP to give your plants: ● **Strong, healthy root system - More energy for growth** ● **Greener, healthier leaves – Great nutrient availability** ● **Reduced stress during transit** ● **Better establishment and improved root growth**

www.suttons.co.uk/SUSOP569 Tel: 0844 736 4208

If ordering by phone please quote Offer Code SUSOP569
If ordering online please enter SUSOP569 in your basket to activate discount.

Lines Open 9am-6pm, 7 days a week. Calls charged at 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

Trustpilot ★★★★★ OVER 45,000 **5 STAR** REVIEWS

Please send to: **Suttons,**
Dept SUSOP569, Poplar Lane,
Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 3BU

ORDER CODE SUSOP569

I enclose a cheque made payable to 'Suttons' for £________

Name________

Address________

____

________Postcode________

Telephone________

Email________

Product Code	Item Description	Price	Qty	Total
KB8840	Bumper Garden Collection 72 Plug Plants ~~£68.88~~ ONLY 14p PER PLANT	£9.99		
KB9321	Bumper Garden Collection 144 Plug Plants ~~£137.76~~	£19.98		
KB7674	Begonia Apricot Shades 24 Plug Plants ~~£19.98~~	£11.99		
KB7827	Begonia Apricot Shades 48 Plug Plants ~~£39.96~~	£16.99		
KA2524	Maxicrop Plant Treatment	£1.00		
			P&P	£6.99
			Grand Total	

Please debit my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Maestro

CSV ☐☐☐ Please turn your card over and write the last 3 numbers from the signature strip.

Cardholder's name________ Expiry Date ____/____

Staying in touch with Suttons

Please read each statement carefully

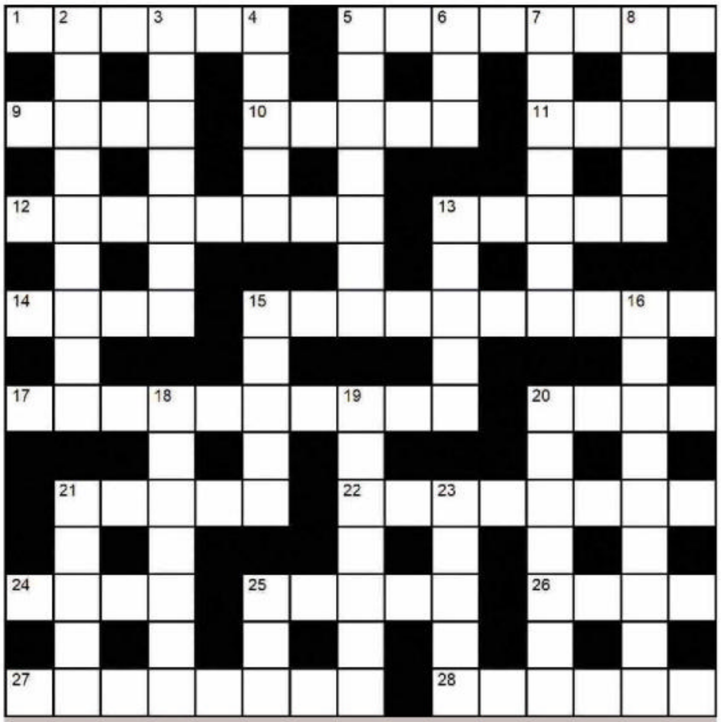
- **Suttons would like to keep you informed about our latest products and offers by post & email. If you would prefer not to receive post, please tick this box ☐. Or by email, please tick this box ☐.**
- **We also feel you'd enjoy some of the latest products and offers by post from some of our trusted retail partners. If you would prefer not to receive these, please tick this box ☐.**
- **Please refer to our privacy policy for more details:** www.suttons.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies
- **For Suttons Terms and Conditions please visit our** website: www.suttons.co.uk/terms-and-conditions

VIEW the Online Catalogue
www.suttons.co.uk/catalogue-request

Suttons' new spring varieties deliver just what's required to continue to inspire the nation's gardeners, with new additions throughout for 2024!

Offer subject to availability. We reserve the right to substitute varieties if necessary *Please note that savings are based on the equivalent of multiples of the cheapest pack size. © 2024 Suttons. † For full T & C's, please visit www.suttons.co.uk. Regretfully we are unable to ship live plants to the following postcode areas: HS, IV41-IV56, KW15-KW17, PA34, PA41-48, PA60-PA78, PA80, PH40-PH44, TR21-TR24, ZE1-ZE3. We are unable to despatch seeds or plants to EU countries and Northern Ireland.

Crossword



ACROSS

1 Small flowering corm marking spring's arrival – *tommasinianus* is a very common form (6)

5 Genus of globe thistle – nice posh sort! (8)

9 A branched inflorescence, element of lacy Medinilla (4)

10 With love, this fruit becomes a tomato! (5)

11 Shallow gardening basket (4)

12 Single species and common name of *Nerium* – a lone red sort (8)

13 Prickly, yellow-flowering shrub in *Ulex* genus – if Spanish, it's in *Genista* (5)

14 Evergreen flowering shrub – partly the best (4)

15 Common name of flowering/ fruiting plants, genus *Aronia* – possibly here by rock (10)

17*Antirrhinum*'s common name (10)

20 Type of linen cultivated in the garden? (4)

21 The mulberry genus – cutworm, finally, ruined ours (5)

22 Britain's only native *Narcissus*, loaned by girl? (4,4)

24 Earth – Charles Dowding doesn't dig it! (4)

25 Transfer plant to larger container? Almost exactly right! (3,2)

26 Vegetables that are flowers when sweet (4)

27 Genus of 'shoo-fly' plant, 'apple of Peru' – can drain off (8)

28 Grass-like plant, genus *Carex* – south on borders (6)

DOWN

2 *Osmunda regalis* – a majestic, large-fronded, spore-producing plant (5,4)

3 Describes a leaf with notched or scalloped edges – a recent development (7)

4 Green turf … pulls back (5)

5 Repots a tangled fibrous grass *Stipa tenacissima* (7)

6 Who even holds a weeding tool? (3)

7 Hazel, for example – crashed Net, true! (3,4)

8 Like one of the *Aruncus* plant's feathery spikes (5)

13 ___ manure: plants dug into soil as fertiliser (5)

15 Bulb-shaped underground stems of eg gladioli (5)

16 *Hypericum* cultivar, named after the Northern Ireland National Trust garden (9)

18 Genus of purple/red leaved herb, purple shiso, Chinese basil – possibly all ripe (7)

19 Snowdrop with green 'V' on inner petals – in spring a late arrival (7)

20 Circular leaf of aquatic plant in *Nymphaea* genus (4,3)

21 *Phormium* '___ Queen' – or am I confused? (5)

23 Species name meaning 'dwarf' (5)

25 Lupin's seed container (3)

- **Solutions to this issue's crossword will be printed in the May issue**

SOLUTIONS TO MARCH CROSSWORD

ACROSS 8 Oxlip **9** Stonecrop **11** Koi **12** Loamy **13** Tibet **14** Senecio **16** Boscage **18** Lasagne **19** Flopped **21** Tendril **24/20** Evening primrose **25** Shred **27** Dusty **29** Red **31** Echeveria **32** Aisha.

DOWN 1 Dock **2** Pleiones **3** Opal **4** Escarole **5** Corymb **6** Bent **7** Spotted dog **10** Rubra **14** Silk-tassel **15** Cigar **17** Stone **19** Freesias **22** Norah **23** Loderi **26** Dove **28** Yuan **30** Dead.

BUYING BACK ISSUES OF
GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

PRINT VERSION
You can buy printed issues of the magazine published up to six issues ago at ourmediashop.com or see below for details.

DIGITAL VERSION
Save money when you subscribe to the digital edition – see page 28

CLOTHBOUND SLIPCASES
Cost from £9.99 each (inc p&p). *Member discounts available – see below for details.*

TO ORDER PRINTED COPIES OR SLIPCASES
UNITED KINGDOM 03330 162114
OUTSIDE UK +44 1604 973722

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED PRINTED ISSUES ORDER FORM
Complete this form and send to: *Gardens Illustrated*, Back Issues, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF (You may photocopy this form).

SINGLE ISSUES
I would like to order ___________ copy/copies of issue(s)___________

MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
☐UK – £5.79 per copy	☐UK – £6.99 per copy
☐EU – £6.49 per copy	☐EU – £7.99 per copy
☐Rest of world – £7.49 per copy	☐Rest of world – £8.99 per copy

CLOTHBOUND SLIPCASES
I would like to order ___________ slipcase(s)

MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
☐UK – £8.49 each	☐UK – £9.99 each
☐EU – £9.45 each	☐EU – £10.50 each
☐Rest of world – £10.80 each	☐Rest of world – £12 each

Postage & packaging is included in all prices.

PAYMENT DETAILS
☐I enclose a cheque/international money order made payable to Our Media Ltd for £ ___________
☐I would like to pay by credit/debit card, please debit my card
Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐
☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐
Expiry date ☐☐☐☐ Issue no. (if shown)☐☐
Signature Date / /

YOUR DETAILS
Title Forename
Surname
Address
Post/Zip code
Daytime tel no.
Email address
Membership number (if applicable)

KEEP IN TOUCH
Gardens Illustrated (published by Our Media Limited) would like to send you updates, special offers and promotions by email. You can unsubscribe at any time.
Please tick here if you would like to receive these ☐
We would also like to keep in touch by post and telephone about other relevant offers and promotions from our publisher Our Media Limited. If you'd rather not be contacted this way please tick here post ☐ phone ☐. For more information about how to change the way we contact you, and how we hold your personal information, please see our privacy policy, which can be viewed online at policies.ourmedia.co.uk/privacy-policy

Ilex Nellie R Stevens

Ligustrum japonicum (pleached)

Magnolia grandiflora

CREATING PRIVACY WITH SCREENING TREES

Photinia Red Robin

Privacy in gardens can be created using trees to hide or screen out an undesirable view. Trees grown for this purpose often have a clear stem up to fence panel height around 1.8-2m with a full bushy canopy above, forming a good screen above the fence line. This type of screening is particularly useful if the garden is overlooked by neighbouring properties or to retain lower-level exposure to an attractive wall or area.

Semi-mature trees can be planted to achieve effective screening from the offset with evergreens being preferred for this purpose as they screen throughout the year. However, a planting scheme that includes deciduous trees can provide rich contrast and seasonal interest.

Screening Trees

Practicality Brown can supply a range of top quality trees for screening, which are particularly useful for creating privacy. This is our selection of the best screening trees, and all are in stock at our nursery in Iver, Bucks:

- Eriobotrya japonica
- Ilex aquifolium Nellie R Stevens
- Ilex castaneifolia
- Ligustrum japonicum
- Magnolia grandiflora
- Osmanthus aquifolium
- Photinia fraseri ‘Red Robin’
- Pinus nigra
- Prunus laurocerasus ‘Novita’
- Viburnum lucidum

Pleached Trees

We also have a range of pleached trees which can be used in the same way; pleached trees can be effective for formal screening and where space is limited.

These are our best trees that are in stock:

- Ilex aquifolium Nellie R Stevens
- Ligustrum japonicum
- Magnolia grandiflora
- Photinia fraseri ‘Red Robin’
- Prunus laurocerasus ‘Novita’

Tree & Hedge Nursery

As well as the screening trees, Practicality Brown grows a range of premium quality Practical Instant Hedge™ at the nursery in Iver. You are welcome to visit to view both trees and hedges.

PRACTICALITY BROWN

www.pracbrown.co.uk

Contact us for details
email trees@pracbrown.co.uk or call
01753 652022 for more information

GARDENS
ILLUSTRATED

MAY

- Late spring blooms in an intimate woodland garden
- Matthew Wilson chooses the best foxtail lilies
- Caisson House: an ambitious new English country garden near Bath
- Designer Jo Thompson's fresh ideas for seasonal container combinations

PLUS Our essential guide to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2024, with the top show gardens, trends, people, plants and more

SABRINA ROTHE, RICHARD BLOOM, JASON INGRAM

ON SALE 26 APRIL

Save money when you subscribe to the digital edition – see page 28.
Also in selected Waitrose, Sainsbury's and Tesco stores,
as well as WHSmith, and all good magazine retailers.

WE NEED A NEW NATURE

In the first of a new series of personal opinion pieces, **Noel Kingsbury** shares his hopes for how gardeners might help to adapt to the post-climate change world

ILLUSTRATION ROSANNA MORRIS

If we collaborate, we would have the capacity to create extensive areas of nature-friendly space

We all know that climate change is happening, but I'm not sure we really understand just how things might be in the future, what the implications are for nature and what we gardeners can do about it.

My fear for the future is that so much of the land we have set aside for nature – National Parks, nature reserves etc – will be ploughed up for food production. Coastal flooding will become a major problem and there will be associated salt-water incursion into areas near the sea, which is often good farmland.

The impact on global agriculture could be severe. The enormous gains of science-led agriculture since the Green Revolution of the 1960s onwards will be lost if we lose so much prime farmland. New hi-tech food sources, such as fungal proteins and lab-grown meat, and changing diets, including reducing meat and dairy consumption, will help to reduce the pressure on land, but they can only go so far.

We will need new places for nature. With this in mind, what can we do to preserve as much of the world's biodiversity as possible? I believe our gardened spaces, both private and public, should focus on conserving biodiversity.

The greatest change in gardening I have seen in my lifetime has been the idea of 'wildlife gardening', which gives me hope that we can extend this concept. If all urban green spaces could be designed and managed with nature in mind, a great deal of habitat could be created. Many of these green spaces will be multi-functional: recreational and amenity, of course, but also used for environmental amelioration, with sustainable drainage schemes, trees for shade and cooling and more.

The area managed by private gardeners is huge, and while many in the future may choose to grow fruit and veg to get around the disruptions to supply chains that climate change will bring, many will want to provide habitats. If we collaborate across boundaries and throughout neighbourhoods to link parcels of habitat, we would have the capacity to create extensive areas of nature-friendly space.

We will also need to re-consider the species of plants we grow. Gardening to date has focused very much on the plants we find attractive. The concept of the wildflower meadow has changed this to some extent, as this involves growing vegetation that is aesthetically low-key for much of the year. We will probably need to continue in this vein. Threatened species are not necessarily pretty, nor are the species that are best for supporting biodiversity – think nettles and hedge garlic, for example. We must learn to see beauty in the complexity and overall impact of interwoven plants in a habitat, and see them less as individual standalones.

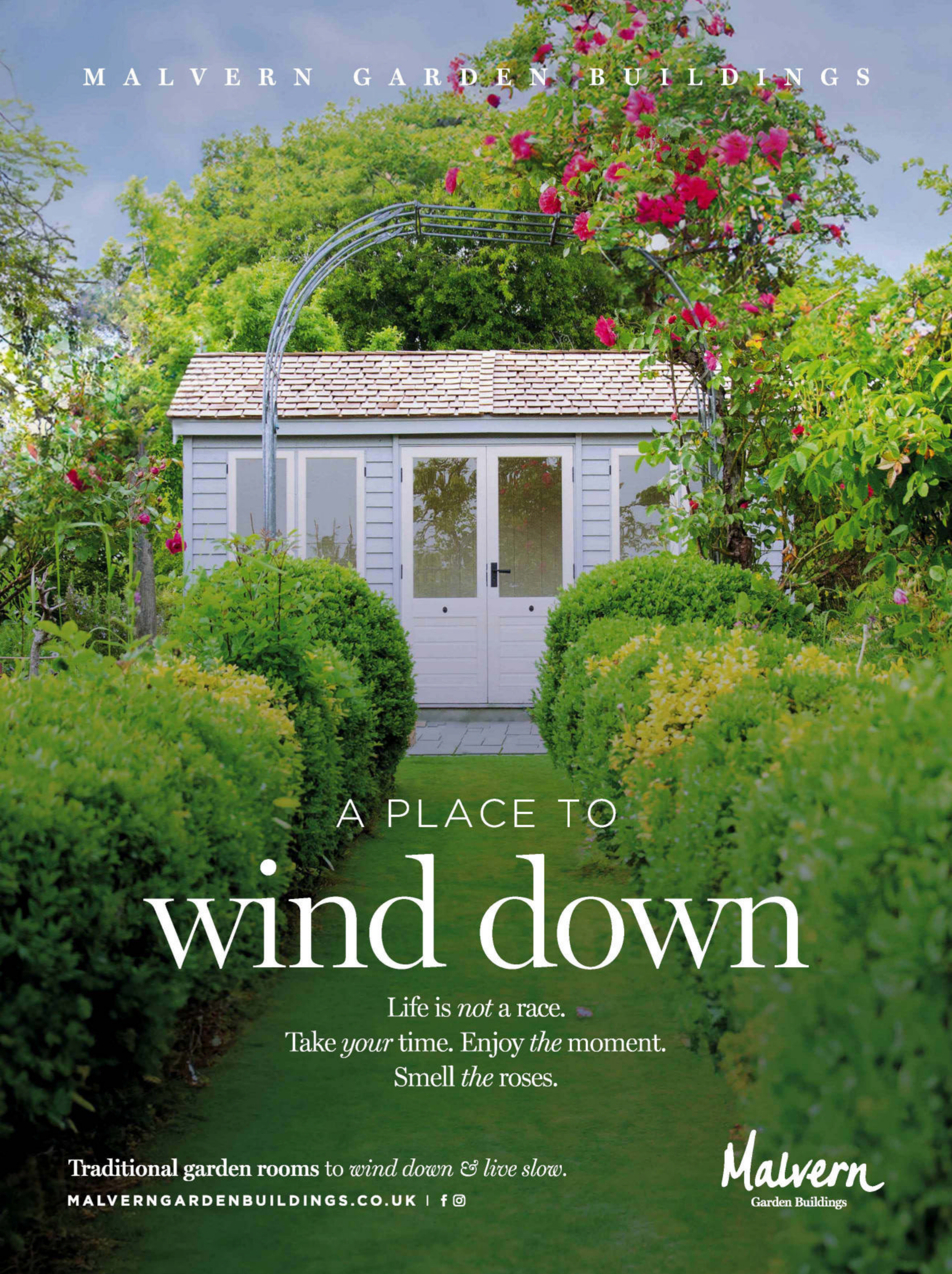
Private gardeners already grow an amazing range of species. The networks of enthusiasts who collect particular plants, such as the one overseen by Plant Heritage, are impressive. We will need networks of amateur growers to conserve the species that are being wiped out in the wild by climate change and agriculture-led habitat destruction. Species conservation and the preservation of the cultural heritage often linked to wild plants could become the core of a new horticulture.

I haven't used the term native, because the idea of 'native plants' may become increasingly irrelevant as climate change shifts the boundaries of temperature and rainfall beyond what supports current regional floras, to say nothing of non-native species establishing novel ecosystems. Species conservation will inevitably involve growing plants thousands of miles from their previous homes – and collaboration will bring growers together across continents.

I believe the post climate-change world of the future will look very different. My hope is that dedicated people will still find solace, companionship and joy in working together to create, manage, evaluate and appreciate pockets and parcels of high-density nature.

There could be endangered species in every garden and along every road. Rare insects and birds could live in clumps of forest at the edge of the local park or community vegetable garden. And local voluntary organisations could bring people together in a communal effort at doing something to mitigate the consequences of, as I see it, the human race's vast collective folly. ❑

• Noel Kingsbury is a garden writer and educator with a special interest in promoting naturalistic planting design.



MALVERN GARDEN BUILDINGS

A PLACE TO
wind down

Life is *not* a race.
Take *your* time. Enjoy *the* moment.
Smell *the* roses.

Traditional garden rooms to *wind down & live slow.*
MALVERNGARDENBUILDINGS.CO.UK | f ◎

Malvern
Garden Buildings

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT TO
CARRY YOU THROUGH THE SEASONS
handmade in the UK since 1995
carriercompany.co.uk
CARRIER COMPANY
norfolk england